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WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!



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**THE PERIOD  
OF THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR  
AND THE  
FIRST RUSSIAN REVOLUTION**



## TWO TACTICS OF SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY IN THE DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION

### PREFACE

In a revolutionary period it is very difficult to keep abreast of events, which provide an astonishing amount of new material for an evaluation of the tactical slogans of revolutionary parties. The present pamphlet was written before the Odessa events.\* We have already pointed out in the *Proletary* (No. 9—"Revolution Teaches")\*\* that these events have forced even those Social-Democrats who created the "uprising-as-a-process" theory and who rejected propaganda for a provisional revolutionary government actually to pass over, or begin to pass over, to the side of their opponents. Revolution undoubtedly teaches with a rapidity and thoroughness which appear incredible in peaceful periods of political development. And, what is particularly important, it teaches not only the leaders, but the masses as well.

There is not the slightest doubt that the revolution will teach social-democratism to the masses of the workers in Russia. The revolution will confirm the program and tactics of Social-Democracy in actual practice, by demonstrating the true nature of the various classes of society, by demonstrating the bourgeois character of our democracy and the real aspirations of the peasantry, who, while being revolutionary

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\* The reference is to the mutiny on the armoured cruiser *Potemkin*. (Author's note to the 1907 edition.—*Ed.*)

\*\* See Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. IX, p. 127.—*Ed.*

in the bourgeois-democratic sense, harbour not the idea of "socialization," but of a new class struggle between the peasant bourgeoisie and the rural proletariat. The old illusions of the old Narodism, which are so clearly visible, for instance, in the draft program of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party on the question of the development of capitalism in Russia, the question of the democratic character of our "society" and the question of the significance of a complete victory of a peasant uprising—all these illusions will be mercilessly and completely blown to the winds by the revolution. For the first time it will give the various classes their real political baptism. These classes will emerge from the revolution with a definite political physiognomy, for they will have revealed themselves, not only in the programs and tactical slogans of their ideologists, but also in the open political action of the masses.

Undoubtedly, the revolution will teach us, and will teach the masses of the people. But the question that now confronts a militant political party is: shall we be able to teach the revolution anything? shall we be able to make use of the correctness of our Social-Democratic doctrine, of our bond with the only thoroughly revolutionary class, the proletariat, to put a proletarian imprint on the revolution, to carry the revolution to a real and decisive victory, not in word but in deed, and to paralyze the instability, halfheartedness and treachery of the democratic bourgeoisie?

It is to this end that we must direct all our efforts, and the achievement of it will depend, on the one hand, on the accuracy of our appraisal of the political situation, on the correctness of our tactical slogans, and, on the other hand, on whether these slogans will be backed by the real fighting strength of the masses of the workers. All the usual, regular, current work of all the organizations and groups of our Party, the work of propaganda, agitation and organization, is directed towards strengthening and expanding the ties with the masses. This work is always necessary; but in a

revolutionary period less than in any other can it be considered sufficient. At such a time the working class feels an instinctive urge for open revolutionary action, and we must learn to set the aims of this action correctly, and then make these aims as widely known and understood as possible. It must not be forgotten that the current pessimism about our ties with the masses very often serves as a screen for bourgeois ideas regarding the role of the proletariat in the revolution. Undoubtedly, we still have a great deal to do to educate and organize the working class; but the whole question now is: where should the main political emphasis in this work of education and of organization be placed? On the trade unions and legally existing societies, or on armed insurrection, on the work of creating a revolutionary army and a revolutionary government? Both serve to educate and organize the working class. Both are, of course, necessary. But the whole question now, in the present revolution, amounts to this: what is to be emphasized in the work of educating and organizing the working class—the former or the latter?

The outcome of the revolution depends on whether the working class will play the part of a subsidiary to the bourgeoisie, a subsidiary that is powerful in the force of its onslaught against the autocracy but impotent politically, or whether it will play the part of leader of the people's revolution. The class-conscious representatives of the bourgeoisie are perfectly aware of this. That is precisely why the *Osvobozhdeniye*<sup>1</sup> praises Akimovism, "Economism"<sup>2</sup> in Social-Democracy, the trend, which is *now* placing the trade unions and the legally existing societies in the forefront. That is precisely why Mr. Struve welcomes (in the *Osvobozhdeniye*, No. 72) the Akimovist trends in the principles of the new *Iskra*. That is precisely why he comes down so heavily on the detested revolutionary narrowness of the decisions of the Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party.

It is exceptionally important at the present time for Social-Democracy to have correct tactical slogans for leading the masses. There is nothing more dangerous in a revolutionary period than belittling the importance of tactical slogans that are sound in principle. For example, the *Iskra*, in No. 104, actually passes over to the side of its opponents in the Social-Democratic movement, and yet, at the same time, disparages the importance of slogans and tactical decisions that are in front of the times and indicate the path along which the movement is proceeding, with a number of failures, errors, etc. On the contrary, the working out of correct tactical decisions is of immense importance for a party which, in the spirit of the sound principles of Marxism, desires to lead the proletariat and not merely to drag at the tail of events. In the resolutions of the Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party and of the Conference of the section which has seceded from the Party,\* we have the most precise, most carefully thought-out, and most complete expression of tactical views—views not casually expressed by individual writers, but accepted by the responsible representatives of the Social-Democratic proletariat. Our Party is in advance of all the others, for it has a precise program, accepted by all. It must also set the other parties an example of strict adherence to its tactical resolutions, in contradistinction to the opportunism of the democratic bourgeoisie of the *Osvobozhdeniye* and the revolutionary phrasemongering of the Socialist-Revolutionaries, who only during the revolution suddenly thought of coming forward with a "draft" of a program and of investigating for

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\* The Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party (held in London in May 1905) was attended only by Bolsheviks, while in the "Conference" (held in Geneva at the same time) only Mensheviks participated. In the present pamphlet the latter are frequently referred to as "new *Iskra*-ists" because while continuing to publish the *Iskra* they declared, through their then adherent, Trotsky, that there was a gulf between the old and the new *Iskra*. (Author's note to the 1907 edition.—Ed.)

the first time whether it is a bourgeois revolution that is going on in front of their eyes.

That is why we think it a most urgent task of the revolutionary Social-Democrats to study carefully the tactical resolutions of the Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party and of the Conference, to define what deviations there are in them from the principles of Marxism, and to get a clear understanding of the concrete tasks of the Social-Democratic proletariat in a democratic revolution. It is to this task that the present pamphlet is devoted. The testing of our tactics from the standpoint of the principles of Marxism and of the lessons of the revolution is also necessary for those who really desire to pave the way for unity of tactics as a basis for the future complete unity of the whole Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, and not to confine themselves solely to verbal admonitions.

N. LENIN

July 1905

## 1. AN URGENT POLITICAL QUESTION

At the present revolutionary juncture the question of the convocation of a popular constituent assembly is on the order of the day. Opinions are divided on the point as to how this question should be settled. Three political trends are to be observed. The tsarist government admits the necessity of convening representatives of the people, but it does not want under any circumstances to permit their assembly to be a popular and a constituent assembly. It seems willing to agree, if we are to believe the newspaper reports on the work of the Bulygin Commission,<sup>3</sup> to an advisory assembly, to be elected without freedom to conduct agitation, and on the basis of restricted qualifications or a restricted class system. The revolutionary proletariat, inasmuch as it is led by the Social-Democratic Party, demands complete transfer of power to a constituent assembly, and for this purpose strives to obtain not only universal suffrage and complete freedom to conduct agitation, but also the immediate overthrow of the tsarist government and its replacement by a provisional revolutionary government. Finally, the liberal bourgeoisie, expressing its wishes through the leaders of the so-called "Constitutional-Democratic Party" does not demand the overthrow of the tsarist government, does not advance the slogan of a provisional government and does not insist on real guarantees that the elections will be absolutely free and fair and that the assembly of representatives will be a genuinely popular and a genuinely constituent assembly. As a matter of fact, the liberal bourgeoisie, which is the only serious social support of the *Osvobozhdeniye* trend, is striving to effect as peaceful a deal as possible between the tsar and



the revolutionary people, a deal, moreover, that would give a maximum of power to itself, the bourgeoisie, and a minimum to the revolutionary people—the proletariat and the peasantry.

Such is the political situation at the present time. Such are the three main political trends, corresponding to the three main social forces in contemporary Russia. We have already shown on more than one occasion (in the *Proletary*, Nos. 3, 4, 5)\* how the *Osvobozhdentsi* use pseudodemocratic phrases to cover up their halfhearted, or, to put it more bluntly and plainly, their treacherous, perfidious policy towards the revolution. Let us now see how the Social-Democrats appraise the tasks of the moment. Excellent material for this purpose is provided by the two resolutions that were passed quite recently by the Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party and by the “Conference” of the section which has seceded from the Party. The question as to which of these resolutions more correctly appraises the political situation and more correctly defines the tactics of the revolutionary proletariat is of enormous importance, and every Social-Democrat who is anxious to fulfil his duties as a propagandist, agitator and organizer intelligently, must study this question with the closest attention, leaving all irrelevant considerations entirely aside.

By the Party’s tactics we mean the Party’s political conduct, or the character, the direction and methods of its political activity. Tactical resolutions are adopted by Party congresses in order precisely to define the political conduct of the Party as a whole with regard to new tasks, or in view of a new political situation. Such a new situation has been created by the revolution that has started in Russia, i.e., the complete, resolute and open rupture between the overwhelming majority of the people and the tsarist government. The new question concerns the practical methods to be

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\* See Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. VIII, pp. 452-60 477-90.—*Ed.*

adopted in convening a genuinely popular and genuinely constituent assembly (the theoretical question concerning such an assembly was officially settled by Social-Democracy long ago, before all other parties, in its Party program). Since the people have broken with the government, and the masses realize the necessity of setting up a new order, the party which set itself the object of overthrowing the government must necessarily consider what government to put up in place of the old, deposed government. A *new* question concerning a provisional revolutionary government arises. In order to give a complete answer to this question the Party of the class-conscious proletariat must make clear: 1) the *significance* of a provisional revolutionary government in the revolution that is now going on and in the entire struggle of the proletariat in general; 2) its *attitude* towards a provisional revolutionary government; 3) the precise conditions of Social-Democratic *participation* in this government; 4) the conditions under which pressure is to be brought to bear on this government from *below*, i.e., in the event of there being no Social-Democrats in it. Only after all these questions are made clear, will the political conduct of the Party in this sphere be principled, clear and firm.

Let us now consider how the resolution of the Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party answers these questions. The following is the full text of the resolution:

*"Resolution on a Provisional Revolutionary Government"*

"Whereas:

"1) both the immediate interests of the proletariat and the interests of its struggle for the final aims of Socialism require the fullest possible measure of political liberty and, consequently, the replacement of the autocratic form of government by a democratic republic;

"2) the establishment of a democratic republic in Russia is possible only as a result of a victorious popular insurrec-

tion whose organ will be a provisional revolutionary government, which alone will be capable of ensuring complete freedom of agitation during the election campaign and of convening a constituent assembly that will really express the will of the people, an assembly elected on the basis of universal and equal suffrage, direct elections and secret ballot;

"3) under the present social and economic order this democratic revolution in Russia will not weaken, but strengthen the rule of the bourgeoisie, which at a certain moment will inevitably try, stopping at nothing, to take away from the Russian proletariat as many of the gains of the revolutionary period as possible:

"The Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party resolves that:

"a) it is necessary to disseminate among the working class a concrete idea of the most probable course of the revolution and of the necessity, at a certain moment in the revolution, for the appearance of a provisional revolutionary government, from which the proletariat will demand the realization of all the immediate political and economic demands contained in our program (the minimum program);

"b) subject to the relation of forces, and other factors which cannot be exactly determined beforehand, representatives of our Party may participate in the provisional revolutionary government for the purpose of relentless struggle against all counterrevolutionary attempts and of the defence of the independent interests of the working class;

"c) an indispensable condition for such participation is that the Party should exercise strict control over its representatives and that the independence of the Social-Democratic Party, which is striving for a complete socialist revolution and, consequently, is irreconcilably hostile to all bourgeois parties, should be strictly maintained;

"d) irrespective whether the participation of Social-Democrats in the provisional revolutionary government prove

possible or not, we must propagate among the broadest masses of the proletariat the necessity for permanent pressure to be brought to bear upon the provisional government by the armed proletariat, led by the Social-Democratic Party, for the purpose of defending, consolidating and extending the gains of the revolution."

## 2. WHAT DOES THE RESOLUTION OF THE THIRD CONGRESS OF THE R.S.D.L.P. ON A PROVISIONAL REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENT TEACH US?

The resolution of the Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, as is evident from its title, is devoted wholly and exclusively to the question of a provisional revolutionary government. Hence, the question as to whether Social-Democrats may participate in a provisional revolutionary government is included in it as part of the whole question. On the other hand, it deals only with a provisional revolutionary government and with nothing else; consequently, it completely leaves out, for example, the question of the "conquest of power" in general, etc. Was the Congress right in eliminating this and similar questions? Undoubtedly it was right, because the political situation in Russia does not at all give rise to such questions as immediate issues. On the contrary, the issue raised by the whole of the people at the present time is the overthrow of the autocracy and the convocation of a constituent assembly. Party congresses should take up and decide not issues which this or that writer happened to touch upon opportunely or inopportunely, but such as are of vital political importance by reason of the prevailing conditions and the objective course of social development.

Of what importance is a provisional revolutionary government in the present revolution, and in the general struggle of the proletariat? The resolution of the Congress explains

this by pointing at the very outset to the need for the "full-est possible measure of political liberty," both from the standpoint of the immediate interests of the proletariat and from the standpoint of the "final aims of Socialism." And complete political liberty requires that the tsarist autocracy be replaced by a democratic republic, as our Party program has already recognized. The stress laid in the Congress resolution on the slogan of a democratic republic is necessary both as a matter of logic and in point of principle, for it is precisely complete freedom that the proletariat, as the foremost champion of democracy, is striving to attain. Moreover, it is all the more advisable to stress this at the present time because right now the monarchists, namely, the so-called constitutional-"democratic" party, or party of "liberation," in our country, are flying the flag of "democracy." In order to establish a republic it is absolutely necessary to have an assembly of people's representatives; and it must be a popular (elected on the basis of universal and equal suffrage, direct elections and secret ballot), and a constituent assembly. This too is recognized in the Congress resolution, further on. But the resolution does not stop there. In order to establish the new order "that will really express the will of the people" it is not enough to call a representative assembly a constituent assembly. This assembly must have the authority and power to "constitute." Taking this into consideration, the resolution of the Congress does not confine itself to the formal slogan of a "constituent assembly," but adds the material conditions which alone will enable that assembly really to carry out its tasks. Such specification of the conditions that will enable an assembly which is constituent in name to become constituent in fact is imperatively necessary, for, as we have pointed out more than once, the liberal bourgeoisie, as represented by the Constitutional-Monarchist Party, is deliberately distorting the slogan of a popular constituent assembly and reducing it to a hollow phrase.

The Congress resolution states that a provisional revolutionary government *alone*, one, moreover, that will be the organ of a victorious popular insurrection, can secure full freedom of agitation in the election campaign and convene an assembly that will really express the will of the people. Is this postulate correct? Whoever took it into his head to dispute it would have to assert that it is possible for the tsarist government not to side with the reaction, that it is capable of being neutral during the elections, that it will see to it that the will of the people is really expressed. Such assertions are so absurd that no one would venture to defend them openly; but they are being surreptitiously smuggled in under liberal colours, by our liberationists. Somebody must convene the constituent assembly, somebody must guarantee the freedom and fairness of the elections; somebody must invest such an assembly with full power and authority. Only a revolutionary government, which is the organ of the insurrection, can desire this in all sincerity and be capable of doing all that is required to achieve this. The tsarist government will inevitably counteract this. A liberal government, which will come to terms with the tsar, and which does not rely entirely on the popular uprising, cannot sincerely desire this, and could not accomplish it even if it most sincerely desired to. Therefore, the resolution of the Congress gives the only correct and entirely consistent democratic slogan.

But an evaluation of the significance of a provisional revolutionary government would be incomplete and false if the class nature of the democratic revolution were lost sight of. The resolution therefore adds that the revolution will strengthen the rule of the bourgeoisie. This is inevitable under the present, i.e., capitalist, social and economic system. And the strengthening of the rule of the bourgeoisie over the proletariat which has secured some measure of political liberty must inevitably lead to a desperate struggle between them for power, must lead to desperate attempts on the

part of the bourgeoisie "to take away from the proletariat the gains of the revolutionary period." Therefore the proletariat, which is fighting for democracy in front of all and at the head of all, must not for a single moment forget about the new antagonisms that are inherent in bourgeois democracy and about the new struggle.

Thus, the section of the resolution which we have just reviewed fully appraises the significance of a provisional revolutionary government in its relation to the struggle for freedom and for a republic, in its relation to a constituent assembly and in its relation to the democratic revolution, which clears the ground for a new class struggle.

The next question is what should be the attitude of the proletariat in general towards a provisional revolutionary government? The Congress resolution answers this first of all by directly advising the Party to spread among the working class the conviction that a provisional revolutionary government is necessary. The working class must be made aware of this necessity. Whereas the "democratic" bourgeoisie leaves the question of overthrowing the tsarist government in the shade, we must push it to the fore and insist on the need for a provisional revolutionary government. More than that, we must outline for such a government a program of action that will conform with the objective conditions of the historic period through which we are now passing and with the aims of proletarian democracy. This program is the *entire* minimum program of our Party, the program of the immediate political and economic reforms which, on the one hand, can be fully realized on the basis of the existing social and economic relationships and, on the other hand, are requisite for the next step forward, for the achievement of Socialism. •

Thus, the resolution fully elucidates the nature and aims of a provisional revolutionary government. By its origin and fundamental nature such a government must be the organ of the popular insurrection. Its formal purpose must be to

serve as the instrument for convening a popular constituent assembly. The substance of its activities must be to put into effect the minimum program of proletarian democracy, the only program capable of safeguarding the interests of the people which has risen against the autocracy.

It might be argued that being only provisional, a provisional government cannot carry out a constructive program which has not yet received the approval of the entire people. Such an argument would merely be the sophistry of reactionaries and "absolutists." To abstain from carrying out a constructive program means tolerating the existence of the feudal regime of the putrid autocracy. Such a regime could be tolerated only by a government of traitors to the cause of the revolution, but not by a government which is the organ of a popular insurrection. It would be mockery for anyone to propose that we should refrain from exercising freedom of assembly pending the confirmation of such freedom by a constituent assembly, on the plea that the constituent assembly might not confirm freedom of assembly! It is equal mockery to object to the immediate execution of the minimum program by a provisional revolutionary government.

Finally, we will note that by making it the task of the provisional revolutionary government to put into effect the minimum program, the resolution eliminated the absurd, semianarchist ideas about putting the maximum program into effect immediately, about the conquest of power for a socialist revolution. The degree of economic development of Russia (an objective condition) and the degree of class consciousness and organization of the broad masses of the proletariat (a subjective condition inseparably connected with the objective condition) make the immediate complete emancipation of the working class impossible. Only the most ignorant people can ignore the bourgeois nature of the democratic revolution which is now taking place; only the most naive optimists can forget how little as yet the



masses of the workers are informed about the aims of Socialism and about the methods of achieving it. And we are all convinced that the emancipation of the workers can be effected only by the workers themselves; a socialist revolution is out of the question unless the masses become class conscious and organized, trained and educated in open class struggle against the entire bourgeoisie. In answer to the anarchist objections that we are putting off the socialist revolution, we say: we are not putting it off, but we are taking the first step towards it in the only possible way, along the only correct road, namely, the road of a democratic republic. Whoever wants to reach Socialism by a different road, other than that of political democracy, will inevitably arrive at conclusions that are absurd and reactionary both in the economic and the political sense. If any workers ask us at the given moment why we should not go ahead and carry out our maximum program, we shall answer by pointing out how far the masses of the democratically-minded people still are from Socialism, how undeveloped class antagonisms still are, how unorganized the proletarians still are. Organize hundreds of thousands of workers all over Russia; enlist the sympathy of millions for our program! Try to do this without confining yourselves to high-sounding but hollow anarchist phrases—and you will see at once that in order to achieve this organization, in order to spread this socialist enlightenment, we must achieve the fullest possible measure of democratic reforms.

Let us proceed further. Once we are clear about the importance of a provisional revolutionary government and the attitude of the proletariat toward it, the following question arises: is it permissible for us to participate in it (action from above) and, if so, under what conditions? What should be our action from below? The resolution supplies precise answers to both these questions. It emphatically declares that it is *permissible* in principle for Social-Democrats

to participate in a provisional revolutionary government (during the period of a democratic revolution, the period of struggle for a republic). By this declaration we once and for all dissociate ourselves both from the anarchists, who answer this question in the negative on principle, and from the *khvostists* among the Social-Democrats (like Martynov and the new *Iskra*-ists) who have *tried to frighten* us with the prospect of a situation wherein it might prove necessary for us to participate in such a government. By this declaration the Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party rejected, once and for all, the idea expressed by the new *Iskra* that the participation of Social-Democrats in a provisional revolutionary government would be a variety of Millerandism,<sup>4</sup> that it is impermissible in principle, as sanctifying the bourgeois order, etc.

But permissibility in principle does not, of course, solve the question of practical expediency. Under what conditions is this new form of struggle—the struggle “from above” recognized by the Party Congress—expedient? It goes without saying that at the present time it is impossible to speak of concrete conditions, such as relation of forces, etc., and the resolution, naturally, refrains from defining these conditions in advance. No intelligent person would venture at the present time to prophesy anything on this subject. What we can and must do is determine the nature and aim of our participation. This is precisely what is done in the resolution, which points out two objectives of our participation: 1) a relentless struggle against counterrevolutionary attempts, and 2) the defence of the independent interests of the working class. At a time when the liberal bourgeoisie is beginning to talk assiduously about the psychology of reaction (see Mr. Struve’s most instructive “Open Letter” in the *Osvobozhdeniye*, No. 71) in an attempt to frighten the revolutionary people and induce it to show compliance towards the autocracy—at such a time it is particularly appropriate for the party of the proletariat to call attention to the task

of waging a real war against counterrevolution. In the final analysis, force alone settles the great problems of political liberty and the class struggle, and it is our business to prepare and organize this force and to employ it actively, not only for defence, but also for attack. The long reign of political reaction in Europe, which has lasted almost uninterruptedly since the days of the Paris Commune, has too greatly accustomed us to the idea that action can proceed only "from below," has too greatly inured us to seeing only defensive struggles. We have now, undoubtedly, entered a new era: a period of political upheavals and revolutions has begun. In a period such as Russia is passing through at the present time, it is impermissible to confine ourselves to old, stereotyped formulae. We must propagate the idea of action from above, we must prepare for the most energetic, offensive action, and must study the conditions for and forms of such actions. The Congress resolution puts two of these conditions into the forefront: one refers to the formal aspect of Social-Democratic participation in a provisional revolutionary government (strict control by the Party over its representatives), the other to the very nature of such participation (never for an instant to lose sight of the aim of effecting a complete socialist revolution).

Having thus explained from all aspects the Party's policy with regard to action "from above"—this new, hitherto almost unprecedented method of struggle—the resolution also provides for the eventuality that we shall not be able to act from above. We must exercise pressure on the provisional revolutionary government from below in any case. In order to be able to exercise this pressure from below, the proletariat must be armed—for in a revolutionary situation matters develop with exceptional rapidity to the stage of open civil war—and must be led by the Social-Democratic Party. The object of its armed pressure is that of "defending, consolidating and extending the gains of the revolution," i.e., those gains which from the standpoint of the interests of the

proletariat must consist in the fulfilment of the whole of our minimum program.

With this we conclude our brief analysis of the resolution of the Third Congress on a provisional revolutionary government. As the reader can see, the resolution explains the importance of this new question, the attitude of the Party of the proletariat toward it, and the policy the Party must pursue both inside a provisional revolutionary government and outside of it.

Let us now consider the corresponding resolution of the "Conference."

### 3. WHAT IS A "DECISIVE VICTORY OF THE REVOLUTION OVER TSARISM"?

The resolution of the "Conference" is devoted to the question: "*The conquest of power and participation in a provisional government.*"\* As we have already pointed out, the very manner in which the question is presented betrays confusion. On the one hand, the question is presented in a narrow way: it deals only with our participation in a provisional government and not with the Party's tasks in regard to a provisional revolutionary government in general. On the other hand, two totally different questions are confused, viz., the question of our participation at one of the stages of the *democratic* revolution, and the question of the *socialist* revolution. Indeed, the "conquest of power" by Social-Democracy is a socialist revolution, nor can it be anything else if we use these words in their direct and usually accepted sense. If, however, we are to understand these words to mean the conquest of power for a democratic revolution and not for a socialist revolution, then what is the point in talk-

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\* The full text of this resolution can be reconstructed by the reader from the quotations given on pp. 400, 403, 407, 431 and 433 of this pamphlet. (Author's note to the 1907 edition. See in this volume pp. 29, 35-36, 42, 81, 86—Ed.)

ing not only about participation in a provisional revolutionary government but also about the "conquest of power" *in general*? Obviously our "Conferencers" were not very clear themselves as to what they should talk about: the democratic or the socialist revolution. Those who have followed the literature on this question know that it was Comrade Martynov, in his notorious *Two Dictatorships*, who started this muddle: the new *Iskra*-ists are reluctant to recall the manner in which this question was presented (before January 9)<sup>5</sup> in that model of a *khvostist* work. Nevertheless, there can be no doubt that it exercised ideological influence on the Conference.

But let us leave the title of the resolution. Its contents reveal mistakes incomparably more profound and serious. Here is the first, part:

"A decisive victory of the revolution over tsarism may be marked either by the establishment of a provisional government, which will emerge from a victorious popular insurrection, or by the revolutionary initiative of a representative institution of one kind or another, which, under direct revolutionary pressure of the people, decides to set up a popular constituent assembly."

Thus, we are told that a decisive victory of the revolution over tsarism may be marked either by a victorious insurrection, or . . . by a decision of a representative institution to set up a constituent assembly! What does this mean? How are we to understand it? A decisive victory may be marked by a "decision" to set up a constituent assembly?? And such a "victory" is put side by side with the establishment of a provisional government which will "emerge from a victorious popular insurrection"!! The Conference failed to note that a *victorious* popular insurrection and the *establishment* of a provisional government would signify the victory of the revolution *in actual fact*, whereas a "decision" to set up a constituent assembly would signify a victory of the revolution *in words* only

The Conference of the Mensheviks, or new *Iskra*-ists, committed the same error that the liberals, the *Osvobozhdentsi* are constantly committing. The *Osvobozhdentsi* prattle about a "constituent" assembly and bashfully shut their eyes to the fact that power and authority remain in the hands of the tsar, forgetting that in order to "constitute" one must possess the *power* to do so. The Conference also forgot that it is a far cry from a "decision" adopted by representatives—no matter who they are—to the fulfilment of that decision. The Conference further forgot that so long as power remained in the hands of the tsar, all decisions passed by any representatives whatsoever would remain empty and miserable prattle, as was the case with the "decisions" of the Frankfurt Parliament, famous in the history of the German Revolution of 1848. In his *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, Marx, the representative of the revolutionary proletariat, castigated the Frankfurt liberal *Osvobozhdentsi* with merciless sarcasm precisely because they uttered fine words, adopted all sorts of democratic "decisions," "constituted" all kinds of liberties, while actually they left power in the hands of the king and failed to organize an armed struggle against the military forces at the disposal of the king. And while the Frankfurt *Osvobozhdentsi* were prattling—the king bided his time, consolidated his military forces, and the counterrevolution, relying on real force, utterly routed the democrats with all their fine "decisions."

The Conference put on a par with a decisive victory the very thing that lacks the essential condition of victory. How was it possible for Social-Democrats who recognize the republican program of our Party to commit such an error? In order to understand this strange phenomenon we must turn to the resolution of the Third Congress on the section which has seceded from the Party.\* This resolution refers

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\* We cite this resolution in full. "The Congress places on record that since the time of the Party's fight against Economism, certain trends have survived in the R.S.D.L.P. which, in various degrees and

to the fact that various trends "akin to Economism" have survived in our Party. Our "Conferencers" (it is not for nothing that they are under the ideological guidance of Martynov) talk of the revolution in exactly the same way as the Economists talked of the political struggle or the eight-hour day. The Economists immediately gave currency to the "theory of stages": 1) the struggle for rights, 2) political agitation, 3) political struggle; or, 1) a ten-hour day, 2) a nine-hour day, 3) an eight-hour day. The results of this "tactics-as-a-process" are sufficiently well known to all. Now we are invited nicely to divide the revolution too in advance into the following stages: 1) the tsar convenes a representative body; 2) this representative body "decides" under pressure of the "people" to set up a constituent assembly; 3) ...the Mensheviks have not yet agreed among them-

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respects, are akin to Economism and which betray a common tendency to belittle the importance of the elements of consciousness in the proletarian struggle, and to subordinate it to the element of spontaneity. On questions of organization, the representatives of these trends put forward, in theory, the organization-as-a-process principle, which is out of harmony with methodical Party work, while in practice they systematically deviate from Party discipline in very many cases, and in other cases preach to the least enlightened section of the Party the idea of a wide application of the elective principle, without taking into consideration the objective conditions of Russian life, and so strive to undermine the only basis for Party ties that is possible at the present time. In tactical questions these trends manifest themselves in a striving to narrow the scope of Party work, declaring their opposition to the Party pursuing completely independent tactics in relation to the liberal-bourgeois parties, denying that it is possible and desirable for our Party to assume the role of organizer in the people's insurrection and opposing the participation of the Party in a provisional democratic-revolutionary government under any conditions whatsoever.

"The Congress instructs all Party members everywhere to conduct an energetic ideological struggle against such partial deviations from the principles of revolutionary Social-Democracy; at the same time, however, it is of the opinion that persons who share such views to any degree may belong to Party organizations on the indispensable condition that they recognize the Party congresses and the Party Rules and wholly submit to Party discipline." (Author's note to the 1907 edition.—*Ed.*)

selves as to the third stage; they have forgotten that the revolutionary pressure of the people will meet with the counterrevolutionary pressure of tsarism and that, therefore, either the "decision" will remain unfulfilled or the issue will be decided after all by the victory or the defeat of the popular insurrection. The resolution of the Conference is an exact reproduction of the following reasoning of the Economists: a decisive victory of the workers may be marked either by the realization of the eight-hour day in a revolutionary way, or by the grant of a ten-hour day and a "decision" to go over to a nine-hour day. . . . Exactly the same.

It may be objected, perhaps, that the authors of the resolution did not mean to *place* the victory of an insurrection on a *par* with the "decision" of a representative institution convened by the tsar, that they only wanted to provide for the Party's tactics in either case. To this our answer would be: 1) The text of the resolution plainly and unambiguously describes the *decision* of a representative institution as "a decisive victory of the revolution over tsarism." Perhaps that is the result of careless wording, perhaps it could be corrected after consulting the minutes, but, so long as it is not corrected, the present wording can have only one meaning, and this meaning is entirely in keeping with the *Osvobozhdeniye* line of reasoning. 2) The *Osvobozhdeniye* line of reasoning, into which the authors of the resolution have drifted, stands out in incomparably greater relief in other literary productions of the new *Iskra*-ists. For instance, the organ of the Tiflis Committee, *Sotsial-Demokrat* (in the Georgian language; praised by the *Iskra* in No. 100), in the article "The Zemsky Sobor and Our Tactics," goes so far as to say that the "tactics" "which make the Zemsky Sobor the centre of our activities" (about the convocation of which, we may add, nothing definite is known as yet!) "*are more advantageous for us*" than the "tactics" of armed insurrection and the establishment of a provisional revolutionary government. We shall refer to this article again further on.



3) No objection can be made to a preliminary discussion of what tactics the Party should adopt in the event of the victory of the revolution as well as in the event of its defeat, in the event of a successful insurrection as well as in the event of the insurrection failing to develop into a serious force. It is possible that the tsarist government will succeed in convening a representative assembly for the purpose of coming to terms with the liberal bourgeoisie; providing for that eventuality, the resolution of the Third Congress speaks plainly about "hypocritical policy," "pseudo democracy," "a travesty of popular representation, something like the so-called Zemsky Sobor."\* But the whole point is that this is not said in the resolution on a provisional revolutionary government, for it has nothing to do with a provisional revolutionary government. This eventuality defers the problem of the insurrection and of the establishment of a provisional revolutionary government; it alters this problem, etc. The point in question now is not that all kinds of combinations are possible, that both victory and defeat are possible, that there may be direct or circuitous paths; the point is that it is impermissible for a Social-Democrat to cause confusion in the minds of the workers concerning the genuinely revolutionary path, that it is impermissible, to describe in the

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\* The following is the text of this resolution on the attitude towards the tactics of the government on the eve of the revolution:

"Whereas for purposes of self-preservation the government during the present revolutionary period, while intensifying the usual measures of repression directed mainly against the class-conscious elements of the proletariat, at the same time 1) tries by means of concessions and promises of reform to corrupt the working class politically and thereby to divert it from the revolutionary struggle; 2) with the same object clothes its hypocritical policy of concessions in pseudodemocratic forms, beginning with an invitation to the workers to elect their representatives to commissions and conferences and ending with the establishment of a travesty of popular representation, something like the so-called Zemsky Sobor; 3) organizes the so-called Black Hundreds and incites against the revolution all those elements of the people in general who are reactionary, ignorant or blinded by racial or religious hatred:

*Osvobozhdeniye* manner, as a decisive victory that which lacks the *main* requisite for victory. It is possible that even the eight-hour day we will get not at one stroke, but only by a long and roundabout way; but what would you say of a man who calls such impotence, such weakness as renders the proletariat *incapable* of counteracting procrastination, delays, haggling, treachery and reaction, a victory for the workers? It is possible that the Russian revolution will end in an "abortive constitution," as was once stated in the *Vperyod*,\* but can this justify a Social-Democrat, who on the eve of a decisive struggle would call this abortion a "decisive victory over tsarism"? It is possible that, at the worst, not only will we not win a republic, but that even the constitution we will get will be an illusory one, a constitution "à la Shipov,"<sup>6</sup> but would it be pardonable for a Social-Democrat to obscure our slogan of a republic?

"The Third Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. resolves to call on all Party organizations:

"a) while exposing the reactionary purpose of the government's concessions, to emphasize in their propaganda and agitation the fact that, on the one hand, these concessions were granted under compulsion, and, on the other, that it is absolutely impossible for the autocracy to grant reforms satisfactory to the proletariat;

"b) taking advantage of the election campaign, to explain to the workers the real significance of the government's measures and to show that it is necessary for the proletariat to convene by revolutionary means a constituent assembly on the basis of universal and equal suffrage, direct elections and secret ballot;

"c) to organize the proletariat for the immediate realization, in a revolutionary way, of the eight-hour working day and of the other immediate demands of the working class;

"d) to organize armed resistance to the actions of the Black Hundreds, and generally, of all reactionary elements led by the government." (Author's note to the 1907 edition.—*Ed.*)

\* The newspaper *Vperyod*, published in Geneva, began to appear in January 1905 as the organ of the Bolshevik section of the Party. From January to May, eighteen issues appeared. After May, by virtue of the decision of the Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, the *Proletary* was issued in place of the *Vperyod* as the central organ of the R.S.D.L.P. (This Congress took place in May, in London; the Mensheviks did not appear; they organized their own "Conference" in Geneva.) (Author's note to the 1907 edition.—*Ed.*)

Of course the new *Iskra*-ists have not as yet gone so far as to obscure it. But the degree to which the revolutionary spirit has fled from them, the degree to which lifeless pedantry has blinded them to the militant tasks of the moment is most vividly shown by the fact that in their resolution they, of all things, *forgot* to say a word about the republic. It is incredible, but it is a fact. All the slogans of Social-Democracy were endorsed, repeated, explained and presented in detail in the various resolutions of the Conference—even the election of shop stewards and deputies by the workers was not forgotten, but in a resolution on a provisional revolutionary government they simply did not find occasion to mention the republic. To talk of the “victory” of the people’s insurrection, of the establishment of a provisional government, and not to indicate what relation these “steps” and acts have to the winning of a republic—means writing a resolution not for the guidance of the proletarian struggle, but for the purpose of hobbling along at the tail end of the proletarian movement.

To sum up: the first part of the resolution 1) gave no explanation whatever of the significance of a provisional revolutionary government from the standpoint of the struggle for a republic and of securing a genuinely popular and genuinely constituent assembly; 2) confused the democratic consciousness of the proletariat by placing on a par with a decisive victory of the revolution over tsarism a state of affairs in which precisely the main requisite for a real victory is lacking.

#### 4. THE ABOLITION OF THE MONARCHIST SYSTEM AND THE REPUBLIC

Let us pass on to the next section of the resolution:

“... in either case such a victory will inaugurate a new phase in the revolutionary epoch.

“The task which the objective conditions of social de-

velopment spontaneously raise in this new phase is the final abolition of the whole regime of social estates and of the monarchy in the process of mutual struggle among the elements of politically emancipated bourgeois society for the satisfaction of their social interests and for the direct acquisition of power.

"Therefore, the provisional government that would undertake to carry out the tasks of this revolution, which by its historical nature is a bourgeois revolution, would also, in regulating the mutual struggle of the antagonistic classes of the emancipated nation, not only have to push revolutionary development further forward but also fight against those of its factors which threaten the foundation of the capitalist system."

Let us examine this section which forms an independent part of the resolution. The idea underlying the above-quoted arguments coincides with that stated in the third clause of the Congress resolution. But in comparing these parts of the two resolutions, the following radical difference at once becomes apparent. The Congress resolution, describing in a few words the social and economic basis of the revolution, concentrates attention entirely on the sharply defined struggle of classes for definite gains and places the militant tasks of the proletariat in the forefront. The resolution of the Conference, in a long, nebulous and confused description of the social and economic basis of the revolution, speaks very vaguely about a struggle for definite gains and leaves the militant tasks of the proletariat altogether in the shade. The resolution of the Conference speaks of the abolition of the old order in the process of mutual struggle among the various elements of society. The Congress resolution says that we, the Party of the proletariat, must effect this abolition, that only the establishment of a democratic republic signifies the real abolition of the old order, that we must win such a republic, that we shall fight for it and for complete liberty, not only against the autocracy, but also against

the bourgeoisie, when it attempts (for it will surely attempt) to wrest our gains from us. The Congress resolution calls on a definite class to wage a struggle for a precisely defined immediate aim. The resolution of the Conference discourses on the mutual struggle of various forces. One resolution expresses the psychology of active struggle, the other expresses that of the passive onlooker; one resounds with the call for live action, the other is steeped in lifeless pedantry. Both resolutions state that the present revolution is only our first step, which will be followed by a second; but from this, one resolution draws the conclusion that we must all the more quickly make this first step, all the more quickly get it over, win a republic, mercilessly crush the counterrevolution and prepare the ground for the second step. The other resolution, however, oozes, so to speak, with verbose descriptions of the first step and (excuse the vulgar expression) chews the cud over it. The resolution of the Congress takes the old and eternally new ideas of Marxism (about the bourgeois nature of a democratic revolution) as a preface or first premise from which it draws conclusions as to the progressive tasks of the advanced class, which is fighting both for the democratic and for the socialist revolution. The resolution of the Conference does not go beyond the preface, chewing it over and over again and trying to be clever about it.

This is the very distinction which has long divided the Russian Marxists into two wings: the moralizing and the militant wings of the old days of "legal Marxism," and the economic and political wings of the period of the nascent mass movement. From the correct premise of Marxism concerning the deep economic roots of the class struggle in general and of the political struggle in particular, the Economists drew the singular conclusion that we must turn our backs on the political struggle and retard its development, narrow its scope and reduce its aims. The political wing, on the contrary, drew a different conclusion from these same

premises, namely, that the deeper the roots of our struggle at the present time, the more widely, the more boldly, the more resolutely and with greater initiative must we wage this struggle. We have the very same controversy before us now, only under different circumstances and in a different form. From the premises that a democratic revolution is far from being a socialist one, that the propertyless are not by any means the only ones to be "interested" in it, that it is deeply rooted in the inexorable needs and requirements of the *whole* of bourgeois society—from these premises we draw the conclusion that the advanced class must formulate its democratic aims all the more boldly, express them all the more sharply and completely, put forward the direct slogan of a republic, popularize the idea that a provisional revolutionary government is needed and that it is necessary ruthlessly to crush the counterrevolution. Our opponents, the new *Iskra*-ists, however, deduce from these very same premises that the democratic conclusions should not be expressed fully, that the slogan of a republic may be omitted from the practical slogans, that we can refrain from popularizing the idea that a provisional revolutionary government is needed, that a mere decision to convene a constituent assembly can be termed a decisive victory, that we need not advance the task of combating counterrevolution as our active aim but that we may submerge it in a nebulous (and, as we shall presently see, wrongly formulated) reference to a "process of mutual struggle." This is not the language of political leaders, but of archive mummies.

And the more closely one examines the various formulae in the new *Iskra*-ist resolution, the clearer its aforementioned basic features become. We are told, for instance, of a "process of mutual struggle among the elements of politically emancipated bourgeois society." Bearing in mind the subject with which this resolution deals (a provisional revolutionary government) one asks in astonishment: if you are referring to the process of mutual struggle, how can you

keep silent about the elements which are politically *enslaving* bourgeois society? Do the "Conferencers" really imagine that because they have assumed that the revolution will be victorious these elements have already disappeared? Such an idea would be absurd in general, and would be an expression of the greatest political naïveté and political shortsightedness in particular. After the victory of the revolution over the counterrevolution, the latter will not disappear; on the contrary, it will inevitably start a new and even more desperate struggle. Since the purpose of our resolution is to analyze the tasks that will confront us when the revolution is victorious, it is our duty to devote enormous attention to the tasks of repelling counterrevolutionary attacks (as is done in the resolution of the Congress), and not submerge these immediate, urgent and vital political tasks of a militant party in general discussions on what will happen *after* the present revolutionary period, what will happen when a "politically *emancipated* society" will already be in existence. Just as the Economists, by repeating the general truism that politics are subordinated to economics, covered up their failure to understand current political tasks, so the new *Iskra*-ists, by repeating the general truism that struggles will take place in a politically *emancipated* society, cover up their failure to understand the urgent revolutionary tasks of the political *emancipation* of this society.

Take the expression "the final abolition of the whole regime of social estates and the monarchy." In plain language, the final abolition of the monarchist system means the establishment of a democratic republic. But our good Martynov and his admirers think that this expression is far too simple and clear. They insist on rendering it "more profound" and saying it more "cleverly." As a result, we get, on the one hand, ridiculous and vain efforts to appear profound; on the other hand, we get a description instead of a slogan, a sort of melancholy looking backward instead

of a stirring appeal to march forward. We get the impression, not of living people eager to fight for a republic here and now, but of fossilized mummies who sub specie aeternitatis\* consider the question from the standpoint of plus-quamperfectum.\*\*

Let us proceed further: "... the provisional government... would undertake to carry out the tasks of this... bourgeois revolution." ... Here we see at once the result of the fact that our "Conferencers" have overlooked a concrete question which confronts the political leaders of the proletariat. The concrete question of a provisional revolutionary government was obscured from their field of vision by the question of the future series of governments which will carry out the aims of the bourgeois revolution in general. If you want to consider the question "historically," the example of any European country will show you that it was a series of governments, not by any means "provisional," that carried out the historical aims of the bourgeois revolution, that even the governments which defeated the revolution were nonetheless forced to carry out the historical aims of that defeated revolution. But what is called a "provisional revolutionary government" is something altogether different from what you are referring to: that is the name given to the government of a revolutionary epoch, which directly replaces the overthrown government and rests on the insurrection of the people, and not on some kind of representative institutions coming from the people. A provisional revolutionary government is the organ of struggle for the immediate victory of the revolution, for immediately repelling counterrevolutionary attempts, and not by any means an organ for carrying out the historical aims of the bourgeois revolution in general. Gentlemen, let us leave it to the future historians of a future *Russkaya Starina* to determine exactly

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\* From the perspective of eternity.—Tr

\*\* The remote past —Tr.



what aims of the bourgeois revolution we, or this or that government, shall have achieved—there will be time enough to do that thirty years from now; at present we must put forward slogans and give practical directives for the struggle for a republic and for the proletariat's most active participation in this struggle.

For the reasons stated, the last propositions in the section of the resolution which we have quoted above are also unsatisfactory. The expression that the provisional government would have to "regulate" the mutual struggle among the antagonistic classes is exceedingly inapt, or at any rate awkwardly put; Marxists should not use such liberal, *Osvobozhdeniye* formulations, which lead one to believe that it is possible to have governments which serve not as organs of the class struggle but as its "regulators". . . . The government would "not only have to push revolutionary development further forward but also fight against those of its factors which threaten the foundations of the capitalist system." But it is the proletariat, the very same in whose name the resolution is speaking, that constitutes this "factor"! Instead of indicating just how the proletariat should "push revolutionary development further forward" at the present time (push it further than the constitutionalist bourgeois would care to go), instead of advice to prepare definite ways and means of combating the bourgeoisie when the latter turns against the conquests of the revolution, we are offered a general description of a process, which does not say a word about the concrete aims of our activity. The new *Iskra*-ist method of expressing its views reminds one of Marx's opinion (in his famous "theses" on Feuerbach) of the old materialism, which was alien to the ideas of dialectics. The philosophers have only *interpreted* the world, in various ways, said Marx, the point, however, is to *change* it. Similarly, the new *Iskra*-ists can give a tolerable description and explanation of the process of struggle which is taking place before their eyes, but they are altogether inca-

pable of giving a correct slogan for this struggle. Good marchers but bad leaders, they belittle the materialist conception of history by ignoring the active, leading and guiding part in history which can and must be played by parties that understand the material prerequisites of a revolution and that have placed themselves at the head of the progressive classes.

## 5. HOW SHOULD "THE REVOLUTION BE PUSHED FORWARD"?

Let us quote the next section of the resolution:

"Under such conditions, Social-Democracy must strive to maintain during the whole course of the revolution, a position which will best of all secure for it the possibility of pushing the revolution forward, which will not tie the hands of Social-Democracy in its struggle against the inconsistent and self-seeking policy of the bourgeois parties and which will preserve it from being merged in bourgeois democracy.

"Therefore, Social-Democracy must not set itself the aim of seizing or sharing power in the provisional government, but must remain the party of extreme revolutionary opposition."

The advice to occupy a position which best secures the possibility of pushing the revolution forward pleases us very much indeed. We only wish that, in addition to this good advice, they had given a direct indication as to how Social-Democracy should push the revolution further forward right now, in the present political situation, in a period of rumours, conjectures, talk and schemes about the convocation of representatives of the people. Can the revolution be pushed further forward now by one who fails to understand the danger of the *Osvobozhdeniye* theory of "compromise" between the people and the tsar, by one who

calls a mere "decision" to convene a constituent assembly a victory, who does not set himself the task of carrying on active propaganda for the idea that a provisional revolutionary government is necessary, or who leaves the slogan of a democratic republic in the shade? Such people actually *push the revolution backward*, because, as far as *practical politics* are concerned, they have halted on the level of the *Osvobozhidentsi*. What is the use of their recognition of a program which demands that the autocracy be replaced by a republic, when in a resolution on tactics that defines the Party's present and immediate tasks in the period of revolution they omit the slogan of a struggle for a republic? Actually it is the position of the *Osvobozhidentsi*, the position of the constitutionalist bourgeoisie, that is now characterized by the fact that the decision to convene a popular constituent assembly is considered a decisive victory, while a prudent silence is maintained on the subject of a provisional revolutionary government and a republic! In order to push the revolution *forward*, i.e., beyond the bounds to which the monarchist bourgeoisie is pushing it, it is necessary actively to advance, emphasize and push to the forefront such slogans as will *preclude* the "inconsistencies" of the bourgeois democrats. At the present time there are *only two* such slogans: 1) a provisional revolutionary government, and 2) a republic, since the slogan of a popular constituent assembly *has been accepted* by the monarchist bourgeoisie (see the program of the Osvobozhdeniye League) and accepted for the very purpose of conjuring away the revolution, of preventing the complete victory of the revolution, and of enabling the big bourgeoisie to strike a huckster's bargain with tsarism. And now we see that of the two slogans which alone are capable of pushing the revolution forward, the Conference completely forgot the slogan of a republic, and plainly put the slogan of a provisional revolutionary government on a par with the *Osvobozhdeniye* slogan of a popular constituent assembly, calling

both the one and the other "a decisive victory of the revolution"!!

Yes, such is the undoubted fact, which, we are sure, will serve as a landmark for the future historian of the Russian Social-Democratic movement. The Conference of Social-Democrats held in May 1905 passed a resolution which contains fine words about the necessity of pushing the democratic revolution forward, but which actually pushes it backward, which actually goes no further than the democratic slogans of the monarchist bourgeoisie

The new *Iskra*-ists like to accuse us of ignoring the danger of the proletariat becoming dissolved in the democratic bourgeoisie. We should like to see the person who would undertake to prove this charge on the basis of the text of the resolutions passed by the Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party. Our reply to our opponents is: A Social-Democratic Party, operating in a bourgeois society, cannot take part in politics without marching, in one instance or another, *side by side* with the democratic bourgeoisie. The difference between us in this respect is that we march side by side with the revolutionary and republican bourgeoisie, without merging with it, whereas you march side by side with the *liberal and monarchist bourgeoisie*, also without merging with it. *That is how matters stand.*

The tactical slogans you have formulated in the name of the Conference *coincide* with the slogans of the "Constitutional-Democratic" Party, i.e., the *party of the monarchist bourgeoisie*; moreover, you did not even notice or realize this coincidence, thus actually following *at the tail of the Osvobozhdenetsi*.

The tactical slogans we have formulated in the name of the Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party coincide with the slogans of the democratic-revolutionary and republican bourgeoisie. This bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie in Russia have not yet formed them-

selves into a big people's party.\* But only a person who is utterly ignorant of what is now taking place in Russia can doubt the existence of the elements of such a party. We propose to lead (if the course of the great Russian revolution is successful) not only the proletariat, organized by the Social-Democratic Party, but also this petty bourgeoisie, which is capable of marching side by side with us.

In its resolution the Conference unconsciously *descends* to the level of the liberal and monarchist bourgeoisie. The Party Congress in its resolution consciously *raises* to its own level those elements of the revolutionary democracy that are capable of waging a struggle and not of acting as brokers.

Such elements are mostly to be found among the peasants. In classifying the big social groups according to their political tendencies we can, without danger of serious error, identify revolutionary and republican democracy with the mass of the peasants—of course, in the same sense and with the same reservations and implied conditions as we can identify the working class with Social-Democracy. In other words, we can also formulate our conclusions in the following terms: in a revolutionary period the Conference in its *national\*\* political* slogans unconsciously *descends to the level of the mass of the landlords*. The Party Congress in its national political slogans *raises the peasant masses to the revolutionary level*. We challenge anyone who because of this conclusion may accuse us of evincing a penchant for paradoxes, to refute the proposition that if we are not strong enough to bring the revolution to a successful conclusion, if the revolution *terminates* in a "decisive victory" in the

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\* The Socialist-Revolutionaries are a terrorist group of intellectuals rather than the embryo of such a party, although objectively the activities of that group reduce themselves to this very task of achieving the aims of the revolutionary and republican bourgeoisie.

\*\* We are not referring here to the special peasant slogans which were dealt with in separate resolutions.

*Osvobozhdentsi* sense, i.e., exclusively in the form of a representative assembly convened by the tsar, which could be called a constituent assembly only in derision—then this will be a revolution in which the *landlord and big bourgeois* element will preponderate. On the other hand, if we are destined to live through a really great revolution, if history prevents a “miscarriage” this time, if we are strong enough to carry the revolution to a successful conclusion, to a decisive victory, not in the *Osvobozhdeniye* or the new *Iskra* sense of the word, then it will be a revolution in which the peasant and proletarian element will preponderate.

Some people may, perhaps, interpret our admission that such a preponderance is possible as a renunciation of the view that the impending revolution will be bourgeois in character. This is very likely, considering how this concept is misused in the *Iskra*. For this reason it will not be at all superfluous to dwell on this question.

## 6. FROM WHAT DIRECTION IS THE PROLETARIAT THREATENED WITH THE DANGER OF HAVING ITS HANDS TIED IN THE STRUGGLE AGAINST THE INCONSISTENT BOURGEOISIE?

Marxists are absolutely convinced of the bourgeois character of the Russian revolution. What does this mean? It means that the democratic reforms in the political system and the social and economic reforms, which have become a necessity for Russia, do not in themselves imply the undermining of capitalism, the undermining of bourgeois rule; on the contrary, they will, for the first time, really clear the ground for a wide and rapid, European, and not Asiatic, development of capitalism; they will, for the first time, make it possible for the bourgeoisie to rule as a class. The Socialist-Revolutionaries cannot grasp this idea, for they are ignorant of the rudiments of the laws of development of

commodity and capitalist production; they fail to see that even the complete success of a peasant insurrection, even the redistribution of the whole of the land for the benefit of the peasants and in accordance with their desires ("Black Redistribution" or something of that kind), will not destroy capitalism at all, but will, on the contrary, give an impetus to its development and hasten the class disintegration of the peasantry itself. The failure to grasp this truth makes the Socialist-Revolutionaries unconscious ideologists of the petty bourgeoisie. Insistence on this truth is of enormous importance for Social-Democracy, not only from the theoretical standpoint but also from the standpoint of practical politics, for from it follows that the complete class independence of the party of the proletariat in the present "general democratic" movement is obligatory.

But it does not at all follow from this that a *democratic* revolution (bourgeois in its social and economic substance) is not of *enormous* interest for the proletariat. It does not at all follow from this that the democratic revolution cannot take place in a form advantageous mainly to the big capitalist, the financial magnate and the "enlightened" landlord, as well as in a form advantageous to the peasant and to the worker.

The new *Iskra*-ists thoroughly misunderstand the meaning and significance of the category: bourgeois revolution. Through their arguments there constantly runs the idea that a bourgeois revolution is a revolution which can be advantageous only to the bourgeoisie. And yet nothing is more erroneous than such an idea. A bourgeois revolution is a revolution which does not go beyond the limits of the bourgeois, i.e., capitalist, social and economic system. A bourgeois revolution expresses the need for the development of capitalism, and far from destroying the foundations of capitalism, it does the opposite, it broadens and deepens them. This revolution therefore expresses the interests not only of the working class, but of the entire bourgeoisie as

well. Since the rule of the bourgeoisie over the working class is inevitable under capitalism, it is quite correct to say that a bourgeois revolution expresses the interests not so much of the proletariat as of the bourgeoisie. But it is entirely absurd to think that a bourgeois revolution does not express the interests of the proletariat at all. This absurd idea boils down either to the hoary Narodnik theory that a bourgeois revolution runs counter to the interests of the proletariat, and that therefore we do not need bourgeois political liberty; or to anarchism, which rejects all participation of the proletariat in bourgeois politics, in a bourgeois revolution and in bourgeois parliamentarism. From the standpoint of theory, this idea disregards the elementary propositions of Marxism concerning the inevitability of capitalist development where commodity production exists. Marxism teaches that a society which is based on commodity production, and which has commercial intercourse with civilized capitalist nations, at a certain stage of its development, itself, inevitably takes the road of capitalism. Marxism has irrevocably broken with the ravings of the Narodniks and the anarchists to the effect that Russia, for instance, can avoid capitalist development, jump out of capitalism, or skip over it and proceed along some path other than the path of the class struggle on the basis and within the framework of this same capitalism.

All these principles of Marxism have been proved and explained over and over again in minute detail in general and with regard to Russia in particular. And from these principles it follows that the idea of seeking salvation for the working class in anything save the further development of capitalism is *reactionary*. In countries like Russia, the working class suffers not so much from capitalism as from the insufficient development of capitalism. The working class is therefore *decidedly interested* in the broadest, freest and most rapid development of capitalism. The removal of all the remnants of the old order which are hampering the broad, free and rapid development of capitalism is of decided



*advantage* to the working class. The bourgeois revolution is precisely a revolution that most resolutely sweeps away the survivals of the past, the remnants of serfdom (which include not only autocracy but monarchy as well) and most fully guarantees the broadest, freest and most rapid development of capitalism.

That is why a *bourgeois* revolution is *in the highest degree advantageous to the proletariat*. A bourgeois revolution is *absolutely* necessary in the interests of the proletariat. The more complete and determined, the more consistent the bourgeois revolution, the more assured will be the proletarian struggle against the bourgeoisie for Socialism. Only those who are ignorant of the rudiments of scientific Socialism can regard this conclusion as new or strange, paradoxical. And from this conclusion, among other things, follows the thesis that, *in a certain sense*, a bourgeois revolution is *more advantageous* to the proletariat than to the bourgeoisie. This thesis is unquestionably correct in the following sense: it is to the advantage of the bourgeoisie to rely on certain remnants of the past as against the proletariat, for instance, on the monarchy, the standing army, etc. It is to the advantage of the bourgeoisie if the bourgeois revolution does not too resolutely sweep away all the remnants of the past, but leaves some of them, i.e., if this revolution is not fully consistent, if it is not complete and if it is not determined and relentless. Social-Democrats often express this idea somewhat differently by stating that the bourgeoisie betrays its own self, that the bourgeoisie betrays the cause of liberty, that the bourgeoisie is incapable of being consistently democratic. It is of greater advantage to the bourgeoisie if the necessary changes in the direction of bourgeois democracy take place more slowly, more gradually, more cautiously, less resolutely, by means of reforms and not by means of revolution; if these changes spare the "venerable" institutions of serfdom (such as the monarchy) as much as possible; if these changes develop as little as possible the independent revolu-

tionary activity, initiative and energy of the common people, i.e., the peasantry and especially the workers, for otherwise it will be easier for the workers, as the French say, "to hitch the rifle from one shoulder to the other," i.e., to turn against the bourgeoisie the guns which the bourgeois revolution will place in their hands, the liberty which the revolution will bring, the democratic institutions which will spring up on the ground that is cleared of serfdom.

On the other hand, it is more advantageous for the working class if the necessary changes in the direction of bourgeois democracy take place by way of revolution and not by way of reform; for the way of reform is the way of delay, of procrastination, of the painfully slow decomposition of the putrid parts of the national organism. It is the proletariat and the peasantry that suffer first of all and most of all from their putrefaction. The revolutionary way is the way of quick amputation, which is the least painful to the proletariat, the way of the direct removal of the decomposing parts, the way of fewest concessions to and least consideration for the monarchy and the disgusting, vile, rotten and contaminating institutions which go with it.

So it is not only because of the censorship, not only "for fear of the Jews," that our bourgeois-liberal press deplores the possibility of a revolutionary way, is afraid of revolution, tries to frighten the tsar with the bogey of revolution, is anxious to avoid revolution, grovels and toadies for the sake of miserable reforms as a basis for a reformist way. This standpoint is shared not only by the *Russkiye Vedomosti*, *Syn Otechestva*, *Nasha Zhizn* and *Nashi Dni*, but also by the illegal, uncensored *Osvobozhdeniye*. The very position the bourgeoisie occupies as a class in capitalist society inevitably causes it to be inconsistent in a democratic revolution. The very position the proletariat occupies as a class compels it to be consistently democratic. The bourgeoisie looks backward, fearing democratic progress, which threatens to strengthen the proletariat. The proletariat has nothing

to lose but its chains, but with the aid of democracy it has the whole world to gain. That is why the more consistent the bourgeois revolution is in its democratic changes, the less will it limit itself to what is of advantage exclusively to the bourgeoisie. The more consistent the bourgeois revolution, the more does it guarantee the proletariat and the peasantry the benefits accruing from the democratic revolution.

Marxism teaches the proletarian not to keep aloof from the bourgeois revolution, not to be indifferent to it, not to allow the leadership of the revolution to be assumed by the bourgeoisie but, on the contrary, to take a most energetic part in it, to fight most resolutely for consistent proletarian democracy, for carrying the revolution to its conclusion. We cannot jump out of the bourgeois-democratic boundaries of the Russian revolution, but we can vastly extend these boundaries, and within these boundaries we can and must fight for the interests of the proletariat, for its immediate needs and for the conditions that will make it possible to prepare its forces for the future complete victory. There is bourgeois democracy and bourgeois democracy. The Monarchist-Zemstvo-ist, who favours an upper chamber, and who "asks" for universal suffrage while secretly, on the sly, striking a bargain with tsarism for a curtailed constitution, is also a bourgeois-democrat. And the peasant who is fighting, arms in hand, against the landlords and the government officials and with a "naive republicanism" proposes "to kick out the tsar"\* is also a bourgeois-democrat. There are bourgeois-democratic regimes like the one in Germany and also in England, like the one in Austria and also like those in America or Switzerland. He would be a fine Marxist indeed, who in a period of democratic revolution failed to see the difference between the degrees of democracy, the difference of its various forms and confined him-

\* See the *Osvobozhdeniye*, No. 71, page 337, footnote 2.

self to "clever" remarks to the effect that, after all, this is "a bourgeois revolution," the fruits of a "bourgeois revolution."

Our new *Iskra*-ists are just such clever fellows flaunting their shortsightedness. They confine themselves to disquisitions on the bourgeois character of the revolution just when and where it is necessary to be able to draw a distinction between republican-revolutionary and monarchist-liberal bourgeois democracy, to say nothing of the distinction between inconsistent bourgeois democratism and consistent proletarian democratism. They are satisfied—as if they had really become like the "man in the muffler"<sup>7</sup>—to converse dolefully about a "process of mutual struggle of antagonistic classes," when the question is one of giving *democratic leadership* in the present revolution, of emphasizing *progressive democratic* slogans as distinguished from the treacherous slogans of Mr. Struve and Co., of bluntly and straightforwardly stating the immediate aims of the really revolutionary struggle of the proletariat and the peasantry, as distinguished from the liberal haggling of the landlords and factory owners. Such is now the substance of the question, which you, gentlemen, have missed: will our revolution result in a real, immense victory, or merely in a wretched deal, will it go so far as the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry, or will it "peter out" in a liberal constitution à la Shipov?

At first sight it may appear that in raising this question we are deviating entirely from our subject. But this may appear to be so only at first sight. As a matter of fact, it is precisely this question that lies at the root of the difference in principle which has already become clearly marked between the Social-Democratic tactics of the Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party and the tactics initiated by the Conference of the new *Iskra*-ists. The latter have already taken not two but three steps back, resurrecting the mistakes of Economism in solving problems

that are incomparably more complex, more important and more vital to the workers' party, viz., questions of its tactics in time of revolution. That is why we must analyze the question we have raised with all due attention.

The section of the new *Iskra*-ist resolution which we have quoted above points to the danger of Social-Democracy tying its hands in the struggle against the inconsistent policy of the bourgeoisie, of its becoming dissolved in bourgeois democracy. The idea of this danger runs like a thread through all the literature typical of the new *Iskra*, it is the real pivot of the principle involved in our Party split (ever since the elements of squabbling in this split were wholly eclipsed by the elements of a turn towards Economism). And without any equivocation we admit that this danger really exists, that just at the present time, at the height of the Russian revolution, this danger has become particularly grave. The pressing and extremely responsible duty that devolves on all of us theoreticians or—as I should prefer to say of myself—publicists of Social-Democracy, is to find out *from what direction* this danger actually threatens. For the source of our disagreement is not a dispute as to whether such a danger exists, but the dispute as to whether it is caused by the so-called *khvostism* of the “Minority” or the so-called revolutionism of the “Majority.”

To obviate all misinterpretations and misunderstandings, let us first of all note that the danger to which we are referring lies not in the subjective, but in the objective aspect of the matter, not in the formal position which Social-Democracy will take in the struggle, but in the material outcome of the entire present revolutionary struggle. The question is not whether this or that Social-Democratic group will want to dissolve in bourgeois democracy or whether they are conscious of the fact that they are merging. Nobody suggests that. We do not suspect any Social-Democrat of harbouring such a desire, and this is not at all a question of desires. Nor is it a question of whether this or that

Social-Democratic group will formally retain its separate identity, individuality and independence of bourgeois democracy throughout the course of the revolution. They may not only proclaim such "independence" but even retain it formally, and yet *it may turn out* that their hands will nonetheless be tied in the struggle against the inconsistency of the bourgeoisie. The final political result of the revolution may prove to be that, in spite of the formal "independence" of Social-Democracy, in spite of its complete organizational individuality as a separate party, it will in fact not be independent, it will not be able to put the imprint of its proletarian independence on the course of events, will prove so weak that, on the whole and in the last analysis, its "dissolving" in the bourgeois democracy will nonetheless be a historical fact.

That is what constitutes the real danger. Now let us see from what direction the danger threatens: from the fact that Social-Democracy as represented by the new *Iskra* is deviating to the Right—as we believe; or from the fact that Social-Democracy as represented by the "Majority," the *Vperyod*, etc., is deviating to the Left—as the new *Iskra*-ists believe.

• The answer to this question, as we have pointed out, depends on the objective combination of the actions of the various social forces. The character of these forces has been defined theoretically by the Marxian analysis of Russian life; at the present time it is being defined in practice by the open action of groups and classes in the course of the revolution. Thus, the entire theoretical analysis made by the Marxists long before the period we are now passing through, as well as all the practical observations of the development of revolutionary events, show that from the standpoint of objective conditions there are two possible courses and outcomes of the revolution in Russia. A change in the economic and political system in Russia along bourgeois-democratic lines is inevitable and unavoidable. No power on earth can

prevent such a change. But the combined actions of the existing forces which are effecting that change may result in one of two things, may bring about one of two forms of that change. Either 1) the result will be a "decisive victory of the revolution over tsarism," or 2) the forces will be inadequate for a decisive victory and the matter will end in a deal between tsarism and the most "inconsistent" and most "self-seeking" elements of the bourgeoisie. All the infinite variety of detail and combinations, which no one is able to foresee, reduce themselves—in general and on the whole—to either the one or the other of these two outcomes.

Let us now consider these two outcomes, first, from the standpoint of their social significance and, secondly, from the standpoint of the position of Social-Democracy (its "dissolving" or "having its hands tied") in one or the other case.

What is a "decisive victory of the revolution over tsarism"? We have already seen that in using this expression the new *Iskra*-ists fail to grasp even its immediate political significance. Still less do they seem to understand the class essence of this concept. Surely, we Marxists must not under any circumstances allow ourselves to be deluded by *words*, such as "revolution" or "the great Russian revolution," as do many revolutionary democrats (of the Gapon type). We must be perfectly clear in our minds as to what real social forces are opposed to "tsarism" (which is a real force, perfectly intelligible to all) and are capable of gaining a "decisive victory" over it. Such a force cannot be the big bourgeoisie, the landlords, the factory owners, "society" which follows the lead of the *Osvobozhdentsi*. We see that these do not even want a decisive victory. We know that owing to their class position they are incapable of waging a decisive struggle against tsarism; they are too heavily fettered by private property, capital and land to enter into a need tsarism with its bureaucratic,

police and military forces for use against the proletariat and the peasantry too much to be able to strive for its destruction. No, the only force capable of gaining "a decisive victory over tsarism," is the *people*, i.e., the proletariat and the peasantry, if we take the main, big forces and distribute the rural and urban petty bourgeoisie (also part of "the people") between the two. "A decisive victory of the revolution over tsarism" is the *revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry*. Our new *Iskra*-ists cannot escape from this conclusion, which *Vperyod* pointed out long ago. No one else is capable of gaining a decisive victory over tsarism.

And such a victory will be precisely a dictatorship, i.e., it must inevitably rely on military force, on the arming of the masses, on an insurrection, and not on institutions of one kind or another, established in a "lawful" or "peaceful" way. It can be only a dictatorship, for the realization of the changes which are urgently and absolutely indispensable for the proletariat and the peasantry will call forth the desperate resistance of the landlords, of the big bourgeoisie and of tsarism. Without a dictatorship it is impossible to break down that resistance and to repel the counterrevolutionary attempts. But of course it will be a democratic, not a socialist dictatorship. It will not be able (without a series of intermediary stages of revolutionary development) to affect the foundations of capitalism. At best it may bring about a radical redistribution of landed property in favour of the peasantry, establish consistent and full democracy including the formation of a republic, eradicate all the oppressive features of Asiatic bondage, not only in village but also in factory life, lay the foundation for a thorough improvement in the position of the workers and for a rise in their standard of living, and—last but not least—carry the revolutionary conflagration into Europe. Such a victory will by no means as yet transform our bourgeois revolution into a socialist revolution; the democratic revolution will



not directly overstep the bounds of bourgeois social and economic relationships; nevertheless, the significance of such a victory for the future development of Russia and of the whole world will be immense. Nothing will raise the revolutionary energy of the world proletariat so much, nothing will shorten the path leading to its complete victory to such an extent, as this decisive victory of the revolution that has now started in Russia.

How far such a victory is probable, is another question. We are not in the least inclined to be unreasonably optimistic on that score, we do not for a moment forget the immense difficulties of this task, but since we are out to fight we must desire victory and be able to point out the right road to it. Tendencies capable of leading to such a victory undoubtedly exist. True, our, Social-Democratic, influence on the masses of the proletariat is as yet very, very inadequate; the revolutionary influence on the mass of the peasantry is altogether insignificant; the proletariat, and especially the peasantry, are still frightfully scattered, backward and ignorant. But revolution unites quickly and enlightens quickly. Every step in its development rouses the masses and attracts them with irresistible force to the side of the revolutionary program, as the only program that fully and consistently expresses their real and vital interests.

According to a law of mechanics, every action produces an equal reaction. In history also the destructive force of a revolution is to a considerable degree dependent on how strong and protracted the suppression of the striving for liberty had been, and how profound the contradiction between the antediluvian "superstructure" and the living forces of the present epoch. The international political situation, too, is in many respects shaping itself in a way most advantageous for the Russian revolution. The insurrection of the workers and peasants has already commenced; it is sporadic, spontaneous, weak, but it unquestionably and

undoubtedly proves the existence of forces capable of waging a decisive struggle and marching towards a decisive victory.

If these forces prove inadequate, tsarism will have time to conclude the deal which is already being prepared on two sides, by Messrs. the Bulygins on the one side, and Messrs. the Struves, on the other. Then the whole thing will end in a curtailed constitution, or, if the worst comes to the worst, even in a travesty of a constitution. This will also be a "bourgeois revolution," but it will be a miscarriage, a premature birth, a mongrel. Social-Democracy entertains no illusions on that score, it knows the treacherous nature of the bourgeoisie, it will not lose heart or abandon its persistent, patient, sustained work of giving the proletariat class training even in the most drab, humdrum days of bourgeois-constitutional, "Shipov" bliss. Such an outcome would be more or less similar to the outcome of almost all the democratic revolutions in Europe during the nineteenth century, and our Party development would then proceed along the difficult, hard, long, but familiar and beaten track.

The question now arises: in which of these two possible outcomes will Social-Democracy find its hands actually tied in the fight against the inconsistent and self-seeking bourgeoisie, find itself actually "dissolved," or almost so, in bourgeois democracy?

It is sufficient to put this question clearly to have not a moment's difficulty in answering it.

If the bourgeoisie succeeds in frustrating the Russian revolution by coming to terms with tsarism, Social-Democracy will find its hands actually tied in the fight against the inconsistent bourgeoisie; Social-Democracy will find itself dissolved "in bourgeois democracy" in the sense that the proletariat will not succeed in putting its clear imprint on the revolution, will not succeed in settling accounts with tsarism in the proletarian or, as Marx once said, "in the plebeian" way.

If the revolution gains a decisive victory—then we shall settle accounts with tsarism in the Jacobin, or, if you like, in the plebeian way. “The terror in France,” wrote Marx in 1848 in the famous *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, “was nothing but a plebeian way of settling accounts with the enemies of the bourgeoisie: absolutism, feudalism and philistinism” (see Marx, *Nachlass*, Mehring’s edition, Vol. III, p. 211). Have those people who, in a period of a democratic revolution, try to frighten the Social-Democratic workers in Russia with the bogey of “Jacobinism” ever stopped to think of the significance of these words of Marx?

The Girondists of contemporary Russian Social-Democracy, the new *Iskra*-ists, do not merge with the *Osvobozhden-tsi*, but in point of fact they, by reason of the nature of their slogans, follow at the tail of the latter. And the *Osvobozh-dentsi*, i.e., the representatives of the liberal bourgeoisie, wish to settle accounts with the autocracy gently, in a reformist way, in a yielding manner, so as not to offend the aristocracy, the nobles, the Court—cautiously, without breaking anything—kindly and politely, as befits gentlemen in white gloves (like the ones Mr. Petrunkevich borrowed from a bashi-bazouk to wear at the reception of “representatives of the people” [?] held by Nicholas the Bloody. See *Proletary*, No. 5).<sup>8</sup>

The Jacobins of contemporary Social-Democracy—the Bolsheviks, the *Vperyodovtsi*, *Syezdovtsi*, *Proletartsi*,<sup>9</sup> or whatever we may call them—wish by their slogans to raise the revolutionary and republican petty bourgeoisie, and especially the peasantry, to the level of the consistent democratism of the proletariat, which fully retains its individuality as a class. They want the people, i.e., the proletarian and the peasantry, to settle accounts with the monarchy and the aristocracy in the “plebeian way,” ruthlessly destroying the enemies of liberty, crushing their resistance by force, making no concessions whatever to the accursed heritage of serfdom, of Asiatic barbarism and human degradation.

This, of course, does not mean that we necessarily propose to imitate the Jacobins of 1793, to adopt their views, program, slogans and methods of action. Nothing of the kind. Our program is not an old one, it is a new one—the minimum program of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party. We have a new slogan: the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. We shall also have, if we live to see a real victory of the revolution, new methods of action, in harmony with the nature and aims of the working-class party that is striving for a complete socialist revolution. By our comparison we merely want to explain that the representatives of the progressive class of the twentieth century, of the proletariat, i.e., the Social-Democrats, are divided into two wings (the opportunist and the revolutionary) similar to those into which the representatives of the progressive class of the eighteenth century, the bourgeoisie, were divided, i.e., the Girondists and the Jacobins.

Only in the event of a complete victory of the democratic revolution will the proletariat have its hands free in the struggle against the inconsistent bourgeoisie, only in that event will it not become “dissolved” in bourgeois democracy, but will leave its proletarian or rather proletarian-peasant imprint on the whole revolution.

In a word, in order that it may not find itself with its hands tied in the struggle against the inconsistent bourgeois democrats, the proletariat must be sufficiently class conscious and strong to rouse the peasantry to revolutionary consciousness, to direct its attack, and thereby to pursue the line of consistent proletarian democracy independently.

This is how matters stand with regard to the question, unsatisfactorily answered by the new *Iskra*-ists, of the danger of our hands being tied in the struggle against the inconsistent bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie will always be inconsistent. There is nothing more naive and futile than

attempts to set forth conditions and points,\* which if satisfied, would enable us to consider that the bourgeois democrat is a sincere friend of the people. Only the proletariat can be a consistent fighter for democracy. It may become a victorious fighter for democracy only if the peasant masses join its revolutionary struggle. If the proletariat is not strong enough for this, the bourgeoisie will be at the head of the democratic revolution and will impart to it an inconsistent and self-seeking nature. Nothing short of a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry can prevent this.

Thus, we arrive at the undoubted conclusion that it is precisely the new *Iskra*-ists' tactics, by reason of their objective significance, that are *playing into the hands of the bourgeois democrats*. Preaching organizational diffusion that goes to the length of plebiscites, the principle of compromise and the divorcement of Party literature from the Party, belittling the aims of armed insurrection, confusing the popular political slogans of the revolutionary proletariat with those of the monarchist bourgeoisie, distorting the requisites for a "decisive victory of the revolution over tsarism"—all this taken together constitutes that very policy of *khvostism* in a revolutionary period which perplexes the proletariat, disorganizes it, confuses its understanding and belittles the tactics of Social-Democracy, instead of pointing out the only way to victory and of rallying all the revolutionary and republican elements of the people to the slogan of the proletariat.

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In order to confirm this conclusion, at which we have arrived on the basis of an analysis of the resolution, let us approach this same question from other angles. Let us see,

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\* As was attempted by Starover in his resolution, annulled by the Third Congress, and as is attempted by the Conference in an equally bad resolution.

first, how a simple and outspoken Menshevik illustrates the new *Iskra* tactics in the Georgian *Sotsial-Demokrat*. And, secondly, let us see who is actually making use of the new *Iskra* slogans in the present political situation.

## 7. THE TACTICS OF "ELIMINATING THE CONSERVATIVES FROM THE GOVERNMENT"

The article in the organ of the Tiflis Menshevik "Committee" (*Sotsial-Demokrat*, No. 1) to which we have just referred is entitled "The Zemsky Sobor and Our Tactics." Its author has not yet entirely forgotten our program; he advances the slogan of a republic, but this is how he discusses tactics:

"It is possible to point to two ways of achieving this goal" (a republic): "either completely ignore the Zemsky Sobor that is being convened by the government and defeat the government by force of arms, form a revolutionary government and convene a constituent assembly, or declare the Zemsky Sobor the centre of our actions, influencing its composition and activity by force of arms and either forcibly compelling it to declare itself a constituent assembly or convening a constituent assembly through it. These two tactics differ very sharply from one another. Let us see which of them is more advantageous to us."

This is how the Russian new *Iskra*-ists set forth the ideas that were subsequently incorporated in the resolution we have analyzed. Note that this was written before the battle of Tsushima, when the Bulygin "scheme" had not yet seen the light of the day. Even the liberals were losing patience and expressing their lack of confidence in the pages of the legal press; but a new *Iskra*-ist Social-Democrat proved more credulous than the liberals. He declares that the Zemsky Sobor "is being convened" and trusts the tsar so much that he proposes to make this as yet non-existent Zemsky Sobor (or, possibly, "State Duma" or "Advisory Legislative Assembly"?)

the centre of our actions. Being more outspoken and straightforward than the authors of the resolution adopted at the Conference, our Tiflisian does not put the two "tactics" (which he expounds with inimitable naïveté) on a par, but declares that the second is more "advantageous." Just listen:

"The first tactics. As you know, the coming revolution is a bourgeois revolution, i.e., its purpose is to effect such changes in the present system as are of interest not only to the proletariat but to the whole of bourgeois society. All classes are opposed to the government, even the capitalists themselves. The militant proletariat and the militant bourgeoisie are in a certain sense marching together and jointly attacking the autocracy from different sides. The government is completely isolated and lacks public sympathy. For this reason it is very easy to destroy it. The Russian proletariat as a whole is not yet sufficiently class conscious and organized to be able to carry out the revolution by itself. And even if it were able to do so, it would carry through a proletarian (socialist) revolution and not a bourgeois revolution. Hence, it is in our interest that the government remain without allies, that it be unable to disunite the opposition, unable to ally the bourgeoisie to itself and leave the proletariat isolated. . . ."

So, it is in the interests of the proletariat that the tsarist government shall not be able to disunite the bourgeoisie and the proletariat! Is it not by mistake that this Georgian organ is called *Sotsial-Demokrat* instead of *Osvobozhdeniye*? And note its peerless philosophy of democratic revolution! Is it not obvious that this poor Tiflisian is hopelessly confused by the pedantic *khvostist* interpretation of the concept "bourgeois revolution"? He discusses the question of the possible isolation of the proletariat in a democratic revolution and *forgets . . .* forgets about a trifle . . . about the peasantry! Of the possible allies of the proletariat he knows and favours the landowning Zemstvo-ists and is not aware of the peasants. And this in the Caucasus! Well, were we not right when we said that by its method of reasoning the new *Iskra* was sinking to the level of the monarchist bourgeoisie

instead of raising the revolutionary peasantry to the position of our ally?

"... Otherwise the defeat of the proletariat and the victory of the government is inevitable. This is just what the autocracy is striving for. In its Zemsky Sobor it will undoubtedly attract to its side the representatives of the nobility, of the Zemstvos, the cities, the universities and similar bourgeois institutions. It will try to appease them with petty concessions and thereby reconcile them to itself. Strengthened in this way, it will direct all its blows against the working people who will have been isolated. It is our duty to prevent such an unfortunate outcome. But can this be done by the first method? Let us assume that we paid no attention whatever to the Zemsky Sobor, but started to prepare for insurrection ourselves, and one fine day came out in the streets armed and ready for battle. The result would be that we would be confronted not with one but with two enemies: the government and the Zemsky Sobor. While we were preparing, they would manage to come to terms, enter into an agreement with one another, draw up a constitution advantageous to themselves and divide power between them. These tactics are of direct advantage to the government, and we must reject them in the most energetic fashion..."

Now this is frank! We must resolutely reject the "tactics" of preparing an insurrection because "while we were preparing" the government would come to terms with the bourgeoisie! Can one find in the old literature of the most rabid "Economism" anything that would even approximate such a disgrace to revolutionary Social-Democracy? That insurrections and outbreaks of workers and peasants are occurring, first in one place and then in another, is a fact. The Zemsky Sobor, however, is a Bulygin promise. And the *Sotsial-Demokrat* of the city of Tiflis decides: to reject the tactics of preparing an insurrection and to wait for a "centre of influence"—the Zemsky Sobor....

"... The second tactics, on the contrary, consist in placing the Zemsky Sobor under our surveillance, in not giving it the opportunity to act according to its own will and enter into an agreement with the government.\*

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\* By what means can the Zemstvo-ists be deprived of their own will? Perhaps by the use of a special sort of litmus paper?



"We support the Zemsky Sobor to the extent that it fights the autocracy, and we fight it in those cases when it becomes reconciled with the autocracy. By energetic interference and force we shall cause a split among the deputies,\* rally the radicals to our side, eliminate the conservatives from the government and thus put the whole Zemsky Sobor on the path of revolution. Thanks to such tactics the government will always remain isolated, the opposition strong and the establishment of a democratic system will thereby be facilitated."

Well, well! Let anyone now say that we exaggerate the new *Iskra*-ists' turn to the most vulgar semblance of Economism. This is positively like the famous powder for exterminating flies: you catch the fly, sprinkle it with the powder and the fly will die. Split the deputies of the Zemsky Sobor by force, "eliminate the conservatives from the government"—and the *whole* Zemsky Sobor will take *the path of revolution*. . . . No "Jacobin" armed insurrection of any sort, but just like that, in genteel, almost parliamentary fashion, "influencing" *the members of the Zemsky Sobor*.

Poor Russia! It has been said that she always wears the old-fashioned bonnets that Europe discards. We have no parliament as yet, even Bulygin has not yet promised one, but we have any amount of parliamentary cretinism.

"... How should this interference be effected? First of all, we shall demand that the Zemsky Sobor be convened on the basis of universal and equal suffrage, direct elections and secret ballot. Simultaneously with the announcement\*\* of this method of election, complete freedom to carry on the election campaign, i.e., freedom of assembly, of speech and of the press, the inviolability of the electors and the candidates and the release of all political prisoners must be made law.\*\*\* The elections themselves must be fixed as late as possible so that we have sufficient time to inform and prepare the people. And since the drafting of the regulations governing the convocation of the Sobor has been entrusted to a commission headed by Bulygin, Minister

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\* Heavens! This is certainly rendering tactics "profound"! There are no forces available to fight in the streets, but it is possible "to split the deputies" "by force." Listen, comrade from Tiflis, one may prevaricate, but one should know the limit. . . .

\*\* In *Iskra*?

\*\*\* By Nicholas?

of the Interior, we should also exert pressure on this commission and on its members.\* If the Bulygin Commission refuses to satisfy our demands\*\* and grants suffrage only to property owners, then we must interfere in these elections and, by revolutionary means, force the voters to elect progressive candidates and in the Zemsky Sobor demand a constituent assembly. Finally, we must, by all possible measures: demonstrations, strikes and insurrection if need be, compel the Zemsky Sobor to convene a constituent assembly or declare itself to be such. The armed proletariat must constitute itself the defender of the constituent assembly, and both together\*\*\* will march forward to a democratic republic.

"Such are the Social-Democratic tactics, and they alone will secure us victory."

Let not the reader imagine that this incredible nonsense is simply a maiden attempt at writing on the part of some new *Iskra* adherent with no authority or influence. No, this is what is stated in the *organ* of an entire committee of new *Iskra*-ists, the Tiflis Committee. More than that. This nonsense has been *openly endorsed by the "Iskra"* in No. 100 of which we read the following about that issue of the *Sotsial-Demokrat*:

*"The first issue is edited in a lively and talented manner. The experienced hand of a capable editor and publicist is perceptible.... It may be said with all confidence that the newspaper will brilliantly carry out the task it has set itself."*

Yes! If that task is clearly to show all and sundry the utter ideological decay of new *Iskra*-ism, then it has indeed been carried out "brilliantly." No one could have expressed the new *Iskra*-ists' degradation to liberal bourgeois opportunism in a more "lively, talented and capable" manner.

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\* So this is what is meant by the tactics of "eliminating the conservatives from the government"!

\*\* But surely such a thing cannot happen if we follow these correct and profound tactics!

\*\*\* Both the armed proletariat and the conservatives "eliminated from the government"?

## 8. OSVOBOZHDENIYE-ISM AND NEW ISKRA-ISM

Let us now proceed to another striking confirmation of the political meaning of new *Iskra*-ism.

In a splendid, remarkable and most instructive article, entitled "How to Find Oneself" (*Osvobozhdeniye*, No. 71), Mr. Struve wages war against the "programmatic revolutionism" of our extreme parties. Mr. Struve is particularly displeased with me personally.\* As for myself, Mr. Struve could not please me more: I could not wish for a better ally in the fight against the renascent Economism of the new *Iskra*-ists and the utter lack of principle displayed by the "Socialist-Revolutionaries." On some other occasion we shall relate how Mr. Struve and the *Osvobozhdeniye* proved in

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\* "In comparison with the revolutionism of Messrs. Lenin and associates, the revolutionism of the West-European Social-Democracy of Bebel, and even of Kautsky, is opportunism; but the foundations of even this already toned down revolutionism have been undermined and washed away by history." A most irate thrust. Only Mr. Struve is mistaken in thinking that it is possible to pile everything on to me, as if I were dead. It is sufficient for me to issue a challenge to Mr. Struve, which he will never be able to accept. When and where did I call the "revolutionism of Bebel and Kautsky" opportunism? When and where did I ever claim to have created any sort of special trend in International Social-Democracy *not identical* with the trend of Bebel and Kautsky? When and where have there been brought to light differences between me, on the one hand, and Bebel and Kautsky, on the other—differences even slightly approximating in seriousness the differences between Bebel and Kautsky, for instance, on the agrarian question in Breslau? Let Mr. Struve try to answer these three questions.

And to our readers we say: The liberal bourgeoisie *everywhere* and *always* has recourse to the method of assuring its adherents in a given country that the Social-Democrats of that country are the most unreasonable, whereas their comrades in a neighbouring country are "good boys." The German bourgeoisie has held up those "good boys" of French Socialists as models for the Bebels and the Kautskys *hundreds of times*. The French bourgeoisie quite recently pointed to the "good boy" Bebel as a model for the French Socialists. It is an old trick, Mr. Struve! You will find only children and ignoramuses swallowing that bait. The complete unanimity of international revolutionary Social-Democracy on all major questions of program and tactics is a most incontrovertible fact.

practice how utterly reactionary are the "amendments" to Marxism made in the draft program of the Socialist-Revolutionaries. We have already repeatedly spoken about how Mr. Struve rendered me honest, faithful and real service every time he approved of the new *Iskra*-ists in principle\* and we shall say so once more now.

Mr. Struve's article contains a number of very interesting statements, which we can note here only in passing. He intends "to create Russian democracy by relying on class collaboration and not on class struggle," in which case "the socially privileged intelligentsia" (something in the nature of the "cultured nobility" to which Mr. Struve makes obeisance with the grace of a truly high-society . . . lackey) will bring the weight of its "social position" (the weight of its moneybags) to this "non-class" party. Mr. Struve expresses the desire to show the youth the worthlessness "of the hackneyed radical opinion that the bourgeoisie has become frightened and has sold out the proletariat and the cause of liberty." (We welcome this desire with all our heart. Nothing will confirm the correctness of this Marxian "hackneyed" opinion better than a war waged against it by Mr. Struve. Please, Mr. Struve, don't pigeonhole this splendid plan of yours!)

For the purposes of our subject it is important to note

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\* Let us remind the reader that the article "What Should Not Be Done?" (*Iskra*, No. 52) was hailed with noise and clamour by the *Osvobozhdeniye* as a "noteworthy turn" towards concessions to the opportunists. The trends of the principles behind the new *Iskra* ideas were especially lauded by the *Osvobozhdeniye* in an item on the split among the Russian Social-Democrats. Commenting on Trotsky's pamphlet, "Our Political Tasks," the *Osvobozhdeniye* pointed out the similarity between the ideas of this author and what was once written and said by the *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ists Krichevsky, Martynov, Akimov (see the leaflet entitled "An Obliging Liberal" published by the *Vperyod*). The *Osvobozhdeniye* welcomed Martynov's pamphlet on the two dictatorships (see the item in the *Vperyod*, No. 9). Finally Starover's belated complaints about the old slogan of the old *Iskra*, "first draw a line of demarcation and then unite," met with special sympathy on the part of the *Osvobozhdeniye*.

the *practical* slogans against which this politically sensitive representative of the Russian bourgeoisie, who is so responsive to the slightest change in the weather, is fighting at the present time. First, he is fighting against the slogan of republicanism. Mr. Struve is firmly convinced that this slogan is "incomprehensible and foreign to the masses of the people" (he forgets to add: comprehensible, but not of advantage to the bourgeoisie!). We should like to see what reply Mr. Struve would get from the workers in our study circles and at our mass meetings! Or are the workers not the people? And the peasants? They are given to what Mr. Struve calls "naive republicanism" ("to kick out the tsar")—but the liberal bourgeoisie believes that *naive* republicanism will be replaced not by enlightened republicanism but by enlightened monarchism! Ça dépend, Mr. Struve; it will depend on circumstances. Neither tsarism nor the bourgeoisie can help opposing a radical improvement in the condition of the peasantry at the expense of the landed estates, whereas the working class cannot help assisting the peasantry in this respect.

Secondly, Mr. Struve assures us that "in a civil war the attacking party always proves to be in the wrong." This idea verges closely on the above-mentioned trends of the new *Iskra* ideas. We will not say, of course, that in civil war it is *always* advantageous to attack; no, sometimes defensive tactics are obligatory *for a time*. But to apply a proposition like the one Mr. Struve has made to Russia in 1905 means precisely displaying a little of the "hackneyed radical opinion" ("the bourgeoisie takes fright and betrays the cause of liberty"). Whoever now refuses to attack the autocracy and reaction, whoever is not making preparations for such an attack, whoever is not advocating it, takes the name of adherent of the revolution in vain.

Mr. Struve condemns the slogans: "secrecy" and "rioting" (a riot being "an insurrection in miniature"). Mr. Struve spurns both the one and the other—and he does so from

the standpoint of "approaching the masses." We should like to ask Mr. Struve whether he can point to any passage in, for instance, *What Is To Be Done?*—the work of an extreme revolutionary from his standpoint—which advocates rioting. As regards "secrecy" is there really much difference between, for example, us and Mr. Struve? Are we not both working on "illegal" newspapers which are being smuggled into Russia "secretly" and which serve the "secret" groups of either the Osvobozhdeniye League or the R.S.D.L.P.? Our workers' mass meetings are often held "secretly"—that sin does exist. But what about the meetings of the gentlemen of the Osvobozhdeniye League? Is there any reason why you should brag, Mr. Struve, and look down upon the despised partisans of despised secrecy?

True, the supplying of arms to the workers demands strict secrecy. On this point Mr. Struve is rather more outspoken. Just listen: "As regards armed insurrection, or a revolution in the technical sense, only mass propaganda in favour of a democratic program can create the social-psychological conditions for a general armed insurrection. Thus, even from the point of view that an armed insurrection is the *inevitable* consummation of the present struggle for emancipation—a view I do not share—the permeation of the masses with ideas of democratic reform is a most fundamental and most necessary task."

Mr. Struve tries to evade the issue. He speaks of the inevitability of an insurrection instead of speaking about its necessity for the victory of the revolution. The insurrection—unprepared, spontaneous, sporadic—has already begun. No one can positively vouch that it will develop into an entire and integral popular armed insurrection, for that depends on the state of the revolutionary forces (which can be fully gauged only in the course of the struggle itself), on the behaviour of the government and the bourgeoisie, and on a number of other circumstances which it is impossible to estimate exactly. There is no point in speaking

about inevitability, in the sense of absolute certainty with regard to some definite event, as Mr. Struve does. What you must discuss, if you want to be a partisan of the revolution is whether insurrection is *necessary for the victory* of the revolution, whether it is necessary to proclaim it vigorously, to advocate and make immediate and energetic preparations for it. Mr. Struve cannot fail to understand this difference: he does not, for instance, obscure the question of the necessity of universal suffrage—which is indisputable for a democrat—by raising the question of whether its attainment is inevitable in the course of the present revolution—which is debatable and of no urgency for people engaged in political activity. By evading the issue of the necessity of an insurrection, Mr. Struve expresses the innermost essence of the political position of the liberal bourgeoisie. In the first place, the bourgeoisie would prefer to come to terms with the autocracy rather than crush it; secondly, the bourgeoisie in any case thrusts the armed struggle upon the shoulders of the workers. This is the *real* meaning of Mr. Struve's evasiveness. That is why he *backs out* of the question of the necessity of an insurrection towards the question of the "social-psychological conditions" for it, of preliminary "propaganda." Just as the bourgeois windbags in the Frankfurt Parliament of 1848 engaged in drawing up resolutions, declarations and decisions, in "mass propaganda" and in preparing the "social-psychological conditions" at a time when it was a matter of repelling the armed force of the government, when the movement "led to the necessity" for an armed struggle, when verbal persuasion alone (which is a hundredfold necessary during the preparatory period) became banal, bourgeois inactivity and cowardice—so also Mr. Struve evades the question of insurrection, screening himself behind *phrases*. Mr. Struve vividly shows us what many Social-Democrats stubbornly fail to see, namely, that a revolutionary period differs from ordinary, everyday preparatory periods in history in that the

temper, excitement and convictions of the masses must and do reveal themselves in *action*.

Vulgar revolutionism fails to see that the word is also a deed; this proposition is indisputable when applied to history *generally*, or to those periods of history when no open political mass actions take place, and when they cannot be replaced or artificially evoked by putsches of any sort. *Khvostist* revolutionaries fail to understand that—when a revolutionary period has started, when the old “superstructure” has cracked from top to bottom, when open political action on the part of the classes and masses who are creating a new superstructure for themselves has become a fact, when civil war has begun—then, to confine oneself to “words” *as of old*, and fail to advance the *direct slogan* to pass to “deeds,” still to try avoid deeds by pleading the need for “psychological conditions” and “propaganda” in general, is apathy, lifelessness, pedantry, or else betrayal of the revolution and treachery to it. The Frankfurt windbags of the democratic bourgeoisie are a memorable historical example of just such treachery, or of just such pedantic stupidity.

Would you like an explanation of this difference between vulgar revolutionism and the *khvostism* of revolutionaries by an example taken from the history of the Social-Democratic movement in Russia? We shall give you such an explanation. Call to mind the years 1901 and 1902, which are so recent but which already seem ancient history to us today. Demonstrations had begun. The protagonists of vulgar revolutionism raised a cry about “storming” (*Rabocheye Dyelo*), “bloodthirsty leaflets” were issued (of Berlin origin, if my memory does not fail me), attacks were made on the “literature writing” and armchair nature of the idea of conducting agitation on a national scale through a newspaper (*Nadezhdin*). On the other hand, the *khvostism* of revolutionaries was revealed in preaching that “the economic struggle is the *best* means of political agitation.” What



was the attitude of the revolutionary Social-Democrats? They attacked both these trends. They condemned flash-in-the-pan methods and the cries about storming, for it was or should have been obvious to all that open mass action was a matter of the days to come. They condemned *khvostism* and bluntly issued the slogan *even* of a popular armed insurrection, not in the sense of a direct appeal (Mr. Struve would not discover any appeals to "riots" in our utterances of that period), but in the sense of a *necessary* deduction, in the sense of "propaganda" (about which Mr. Struve has bethought himself only now—our honourable Mr. Struve is always several years behind the times), in the sense of preparing those very "social-psychological conditions" about which the representatives of the bewildered, huckstering bourgeoisie are now holding forth "sadly and inappropriately." *At that time* propaganda and agitation, agitation and propaganda, were really pushed to the fore by the objective state of affairs. *At that time* the work of publishing an all-Russian political newspaper, the weekly issuance of which was regarded as an ideal, could be proposed (and was proposed in *What Is To Be Done?*) as the touchstone of the work of preparing for an insurrection. *At that time* the slogans advocating mass agitation *instead of* direct armed action, preparation of the social-psychological conditions for insurrection *instead of* flash-in-the-pan methods, were the only correct slogans for the revolutionary Social-Democratic movement. *At the present time* the slogans have been superseded by events, the movement has gone beyond them, they have become castoffs, rags fit only to clothe the hypocrisy of the *Osvobozhdeniye* and the *khvostism* of the new *Iskra!*

Or perhaps I am mistaken? Perhaps the revolution has not yet begun? Perhaps the time for open political action of classes has not yet arrived? Perhaps there is still no civil war, and the criticism of weapons should not as yet

be the *necessary* and obligatory successor, heir, trustee and wielder of the weapon of criticism?

Look around, poke your head out of your study and look into the street for an answer. Has not the government itself started civil war by shooting down hosts of peaceful and unarmed citizens everywhere? Are not the armed Black Hundreds acting as "arguments" of the autocracy? Has not the bourgeoisie—even the bourgeoisie—recognized the need for a citizens' militia? Does not Mr. Struve himself, the ideally moderate and punctilious Mr. Struve, say (alas, he says so only to evade the issue!) that "the open nature of revolutionary action" (that's the sort of fellows we are today!) "is now one of the most important conditions for exerting an educational influence upon the masses of the people"?

Those who have eyes to see can have no doubt as to how the question of armed insurrection must be presented by the partisans of revolution at the present time. Just take a look at the *three* ways in which this question has been presented in the organs of the free press which are at all capable of influencing the *masses*.

The first presentation. The resolution of the Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party.\* It is

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\* The following is the text in full:

"Whereas

"1. the proletariat, being, by virtue of its very position, the most advanced and the only consistently revolutionary class, is for that very reason called upon to play the leading part in the general democratic revolutionary movement in Russia;

"2. this movement has already brought about the necessity of an armed insurrection;

"3. the proletariat will inevitably take a most energetic part in this insurrection, this participation determining the fate of the revolution in Russia;

"4. the proletariat can play the leading part in this revolution only if it is welded into a united and independent political force under the banner of the Social-Democratic Labour Party, which is to guide its struggle not only ideologically but practically as well;

"5. it is only by fulfilling this part that the proletariat can be assured of the most favourable conditions for the struggle for

publicly acknowledged and declared that the general democratic revolutionary movement *has already led to the necessity* of an armed insurrection. The organization of the proletariat for an insurrection has been placed on the order of the day as one of the essential, principal and *indispensable* tasks of the Party. Instructions are issued to adopt the *most energetic* measures to arm the proletariat and to ensure the possibility of directly leading the insurrection.

The second presentation. An article in the *Osvobozhdeniye*, containing a statement of principles, by the "leader of the Russian constitutionalists" (as Mr. Struve was recently described by such an influential organ of the European bourgeoisie as the *Frankfurter Zeitung*), or the leader of the Russian progressive bourgeoisie. He does not share the opinion that an insurrection is inevitable. Secret activity and riots are the specific methods of irrational revolutionism. Republicanism is a method of stunning. The question of armed insurrection is really a mere technical question, whereas "the fundamental and most necessary task" is to carry on mass propaganda and to prepare the social-psychological conditions.

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Socialism against the propertied classes of a bourgeois-democratic Russia;

"the Third Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. recognizes that the task of organizing the proletariat for direct struggle against the autocracy through armed insurrection is one of the most important and pressing tasks of the Party in the present revolutionary period.

"The Congress therefore resolves to instruct all the Party organizations:

"a) to explain to the proletariat by means of propaganda and agitation not only the political importance, but also the practical organizational aspect of the impending armed insurrection;

"b) in this propaganda and agitation to explain the part played by mass political strikes, which may be of great importance at the beginning and in the very process of the insurrection;

"c) to adopt the most energetic measures to arm the proletariat and also to draw up a plan for the armed insurrection and for direct leadership of the latter, establishing for this purpose, to the extent that it is necessary, special groups of Party functionaries." (Author's note to the 1907 edition.—*Ed.*)

The third presentation. The resolution of the new *Iskra*-ist Conference. Our task is to prepare an insurrection. A planned insurrection is out of the question. Favourable conditions for an insurrection are created by the disorganization of the government, by our agitation, and by our organization. Only then "can technical military preparations acquire more or less serious significance."

And is that all? Yes, that is all. The new *Iskra*-ist leaders of the proletariat still do not know whether insurrection has become a necessity. It is still not clear to them whether the task of organizing the proletariat for direct battle has become an urgent one. It is not necessary to urge the adoption of the most energetic measures; it is far more important (in 1905, and not in 1902) to explain in general outlines under what conditions these measures "may" acquire "more or less serious" significance. . . .

Do you see now, comrades of the new *Iskra*, where your turn to Martynovism has led you? Do you realize that your political philosophy has proved to be a rehash of the *Osvobozhdeniye* philosophy?—that (against your will and without your being aware of it) you are following at the tail of the monarchist bourgeoisie? Is it clear to you now that, while repeating what you have learned by rote and attaining perfection in sophistry, you have lost sight of the fact that—in the memorable words of Peter Struve's memorable article—"the open nature of revolutionary action is now one of the most important conditions for exerting an educational influence upon the masses of the people"?

## 9. WHAT DOES BEING A PARTY OF EXTREME OPPOSITION IN TIME OF REVOLUTION MEAN?

Let us return to the resolution on a provisional government. We have shown that the tactics of the new *Iskra*-ists do not push the revolution forward—which they may have wanted to make possible by their resolution—but back.

We have shown that it is precisely these tactics that *tie the hands* of Social-Democracy in the struggle against the inconsistent bourgeoisie and do not safeguard it against being dissolved in bourgeois democracy. Naturally, the false premises of the resolution lead to the false conclusion that: "Therefore, Social-Democracy must not set itself the aim of seizing or sharing power in the provisional government, but must remain the party of extreme revolutionary opposition." Consider the first half of this conclusion, which is part of a statement of aims. Do the new *Iskra*-ists declare the aim of Social-Democratic activity to be a decisive victory of the revolution over tsarism? They do. They are unable correctly to formulate the requisites for a decisive victory and stray into the *Osvobozhdeniye* formulation, but they do set themselves the aforementioned aim. Further: do they connect a provisional government with insurrection? Yes, they do so plainly, by stating that a provisional government "will emerge from a victorious popular insurrection." Finally, do they set themselves the aim of leading the insurrection? Yes, they do. Like Mr. Struve, they do not admit that an insurrection is an urgent necessity, but at the same time, unlike Mr. Struve, they say that "Social-Democracy strives to *subject* it" (the insurrection) "to its influence and *leadership* and to use it in the interests of the working class."

How nicely this hangs together, does it not? We set ourselves the *aim* of subjecting the insurrection of both the proletarian and *non-proletarian* masses to our influence and our leadership, and of using it in our interests. Hence, we set ourselves the aim of leading, in the insurrection, both the proletariat and the revolutionary bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie ("the non-proletarian groups"), i.e., of "*sharing*" the leadership of the insurrection between the Social-Democracy and the revolutionary bourgeoisie. We set ourselves the aim of securing *victory* for the insurrection, which is to lead to the establishment of a provisional government

("which will emerge from a victorious popular insurrection"). *Therefore* . . . therefore we must not set ourselves the aim of seizing power or of sharing it in a provisional revolutionary government!!

Our friends cannot dovetail their arguments. They vacillate between the standpoint of Mr. Struve, who is evading the issue of an insurrection, and the standpoint of revolutionary Social-Democracy, which calls upon us to undertake this urgent task. They vacillate between anarchism, which on principle condemns all participation in a provisional revolutionary government as treachery to the proletariat, and Marxism, which demands such participation on condition that the Social-Democratic Party exercises the leading influence in the insurrection.\* They have no independent position whatever: neither that of Mr. Struve, who wants to come to terms with tsarism and is therefore compelled to resort to evasions and subterfuges on the question of insurrection, nor that of the anarchists, who condemn all action "from above" and all participation in a bourgeois revolution. The new *Iskra*-ists confuse a deal with tsarism with a victory over tsarism. They want to take part in a bourgeois revolution. They have gone somewhat beyond Martynov's *Two Dictatorships*. They even consent to lead the insurrection of the people—in order to renounce that leadership immediately after victory is won (or, perhaps, immediately before the victory?), i.e., *in order not to avail themselves of the fruits of victory* but to turn all these fruits over *entirely to the bourgeoisie*. This is what they call "using the insurrection in the interests of the working class. . . ."

There is no need to dwell on this muddle any longer. It will be more useful to examine how this muddle *originated* in the formulation which reads: "to remain the party of extreme revolutionary opposition."

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\* See *Proletary*, No. 3, "On the Provisional Revolutionary Government," article two. (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. VIII, pp. 440-47.—Ed.)

This is one of the familiar propositions of international revolutionary Social-Democracy. It is a perfectly correct proposition. It has become a commonplace for all opponents of revisionism or opportunism in parliamentary countries. It has become generally accepted as the legitimate and necessary rebuff to "parliamentary cretinism," Millerandism, Bernsteinism<sup>10</sup> and the Italian reformism of the Turati brand. Our good new *Iskra*-ists have learned this excellent proposition by heart and are zealously applying it . . . *quite inappropriately*. Categories of the parliamentary struggle are introduced into resolutions written for conditions in which no parliament exists. The concept "opposition," which has become the reflection and the expression of a political situation in which no one seriously speaks of an *insurrection*, is senselessly applied to a situation in which insurrection *has begun* and in which all the supporters of the revolution are thinking and talking about leadership in it. The desire to "*stick to*" old methods, i.e., action only "from below," is expressed with pomp and clamour *precisely at a time* when the revolution has confronted us with the necessity, in the event of the insurrection being victorious, of acting *from above*.

No, our new *Iskra*-ists are decidedly out of luck! Even when they formulate a correct Social-Democratic proposition they don't know how to apply it correctly. They failed to take into consideration that in a period in which a revolution has begun, when there is no parliament, when there is civil war, when insurrectionary outbreaks occur, the concepts and terms of parliamentary struggle are changed and transformed into their opposites. They failed to take into consideration the fact that, under the circumstances referred to, amendments are moved by means of street demonstrations, interpellations are introduced by means of offensive action by armed citizens, opposition to the government is effected by forcibly overthrowing the government.

Like the well-known hero of our folklore, who repeated

good advice just when it was inappropriate, our admirers of Martynov repeat the lessons of peaceful parliamentarism just at a time when, as they themselves state, actual hostilities have commenced. There is nothing more ridiculous than this pompous emphasis of the slogan "extreme opposition" in a resolution which begins by referring to a "decisive victory of the revolution" and to a "popular insurrection"! Try to visualize, gentlemen, what it means to be the "extreme opposition" in a period of insurrection. Does it mean exposing the government or deposing it? Does it mean voting against the government or defeating its armed forces in open battle? Does it mean refusing the government replenishments for its exchequer or the revolutionary seizure of this exchequer in order to use it for the requirements of the uprising, to arm the workers and peasants and to convoke a constituent assembly? Are you not beginning to understand, gentlemen, that the term "extreme opposition" expresses only negative actions—to expose, to vote against, to refuse? Why is this so? Because this term applies only to the parliamentary struggle and, moreover, to a period when no one makes "decisive victory" the immediate object of the struggle. Are you not beginning to understand that things undergo a cardinal change in this respect from the moment the politically oppressed people launch a determined attack along the whole front in desperate struggle for victory?

The workers ask us: Is it necessary energetically to take up the urgent business of insurrection? What is to be done to make the incipient insurrection victorious? What use should be made of the victory? What program can and should then be applied? The new *Iskra*-ists, who are making Marxism more profound, answer: We must remain the party of extreme revolutionary opposition.... Well, were we not right in calling these knights past masters in philistinism?



# 10. "REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNES" AND THE REVOLUTIONARY-DEMOCRATIC DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT AND THE PEASANTRY

The Conference of the new *Iskra*-ists did not keep to the anarchist position into which the new *Iskra* had talked itself (only "from below," not "from below and from above"). The absurdity of admitting the possibility of an insurrection and not admitting the possibility of victory and participation in a provisional revolutionary government was too glaring. The resolution therefore introduced certain reservations and restrictions into the solution of the question proposed by Martynov and Martov. Let us consider these reservations as stated in the following section of the resolution:

"These tactics" ("to remain the party of extreme revolutionary opposition") "do not, of course, in any way exclude the expediency of a partial and episodic seizure of power and the establishment of revolutionary communes in one or another city, in one or another district, exclusively for the purpose of helping to spread the insurrection and of disrupting the government."

That being the case, it means that in principle they admit the possibility of action not only from below, but also from above. It means that the proposition laid down in L. Martov's well-known article in the *Iskra* (No. 93) is discarded, and that the tactics of *Vperyod*, i.e., not only "from below," but also "from above," are acknowledged as correct.

Further, the seizure of power (even if partial, episodic, etc.) obviously presupposes the participation not only of Social-Democrats and not only of the proletariat. This follows from the fact that it is not only the proletariat that is interested and takes an active part in a democratic revolution. This follows from the fact that the insurrection is

a "popular" one, as is stated in the beginning of the resolution we are discussing, that "non-proletarian groups" (the words used in the Conference resolution on the uprising), i.e., the bourgeoisie, also take part in it. Hence, the principle that any participation of Socialists in a provisional revolutionary government jointly with the petty bourgeoisie is treachery to the working class *was thrown overboard by the Conference*, which is what the *Vperyod* sought to achieve. "Treachery" does not cease to be treachery because the action which constitutes it is partial, episodic, local, etc. Hence, the parallel drawn between the participation in a provisional revolutionary government and vulgar Jaurèsism *was thrown overboard* by the Conference, which is what the *Vperyod* sought to achieve. A government does not cease to be a government because its power does not extend to many cities but is confined to a single city, does not extend to many districts but is confined to a single district; nor because of the name that is given to it. Thus, *the formulation of the principles of this question* which the new *Iskra* tried to give *was discarded by the Conference*.

Let us see whether the restrictions imposed by the Conference on the formation of revolutionary governments and participation in them, which is now admitted in principle, are reasonable. What difference there is between the concept "episodic" and the concept "provisional," we do not know. We are afraid that this "new" and foreign word is merely a screen for lack of clear thinking. It *seems* "more profound," but actually it is only more obscure and confused. What is the difference between the "expediency" of a partial "seizure of power" in a city or district, and participation in a provisional revolutionary government of the entire state? Do not "cities" include a city like St. Petersburg, where the events of January 9 took place? Do not districts include the Caucasus, which is bigger than many a state? Will not the problems (which at one time vexed the

new *Iskra*) of what to do with the prisons, the police, public funds, etc., confront us the moment we "seize power" in a single city, let alone in a district? No one will deny, of course, that if we lack sufficient forces, if the insurrection is not wholly successful, or if the victory is indecisive, it is possible that provisional revolutionary governments will be set up in separate localities, in individual cities and the like. But what is the point of such an assumption, gentlemen? Do not you yourselves speak in the beginning of the resolution about a "decisive victory of the revolution," about a "victorious popular insurrection"? Since when have the Social-Democrats taken over the job of the anarchists: to divide the attention and the aims of the proletariat, to direct its attention to the "partial" instead of the general, the single, the integral and complete? While presupposing the "seizure of power" in a city, you yourselves speak of "spreading the insurrection"—to another city, may we venture to think? to all cities, may we dare to hope? Your conclusions, gentlemen, are as unsound and haphazard, as contradictory and confused as your premises. The Third Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. gave an exhaustive and clear answer to the question of a provisional revolutionary government in general. And this answer covers all cases of local provisional governments as well. The answer given by the Conference, however, by artificially and arbitrarily singling out a *part* of the question, merely *evades* (but unsuccessfully) the issue as a whole, and creates confusion.

What does the term "revolutionary communes" mean? Does it differ from the term "provisional revolutionary government," and, if so, in what respect? The Conference gentlemen themselves do not know. Confusion of revolutionary thought leads them, as very often happens, to *revolutionary phrasemongering*. Yes, the use of the words "revolutionary commune" in a resolution passed by representatives of Social-Democracy is revolutionary phrasemongering and nothing else. Marx more than once condemned

such phrasemongering, when "fascinating" terms of the *bygone past* were used to hide the tasks of the future. In such cases a fascinating term that has played its part in history becomes futile and pernicious trumpery, a child's rattle. We must give the workers and the whole people a clear and unambiguous explanation as to *why* we want a provisional revolutionary government to be set up, and *exactly what changes* we shall accomplish, if we exercise decisive influence on the government, on the very morrow of the victory of the popular insurrection which has already commenced. These are the questions that confront political leaders.

The Third Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. gave perfectly clear answers to these questions and drew up a complete program of these changes—the minimum program of our Party. The word "commune," however, is not an answer at all: it only serves to confuse people by the distant echo of a sonorous phrase, or empty rhetoric. The more we cherish the memory of the Paris Commune of 1871, for instance, the less permissible is it to refer to it offhand, without analyzing its mistakes and the special conditions attending it. To do so would be to follow the absurd example of the Blanquists—whom Engels ridiculed—who (in 1874, in their "Manifesto") paid homage to every act of the Commune.<sup>11</sup> What reply will a "Conferencer" give to a worker who asks him about *this* "revolutionary commune" that is mentioned in the resolution? He will only be able to tell him that this is the name, known in history, of a workers' government that was unable to, and could not at that time, distinguish between the elements of a democratic revolution and those of a socialist revolution, that confused the tasks of fighting for a republic with the tasks of fighting for Socialism, that was unable to carry out the task of launching an energetic military offensive against Versailles, that made a mistake in not seizing the Bank of France, etc. In short, whether in your answer you refer to the Paris

Commune or to some other commune, your answer will be: it was a government *such as ours should not be*. A fine answer, indeed! Does it not testify to pedantic moralizing and impotence on the part of a revolutionary who says nothing about the practical program of the Party and inappropriately begins to give lessons in history in a resolution? Does this not reveal the very mistake which they unsuccessfully accuse us of having committed, i.e., of confusing a democratic revolution with a socialist revolution, between which none of the "communes" differentiated?

The aim of a provisional government (so inappropriately termed "commune") is declared to be "exclusively" to spread the insurrection and to disrupt the government. Taken in its literal sense, the word "exclusively" eliminates all other aims; it is an echo of the absurd theory of "only from below." Such elimination of other aims is another instance of shortsightedness and lack of reflection. A "revolutionary commune," i.e., a revolutionary government, even if only in a single city, will inevitably have to administer (even if provisionally, "partly, episodically") *all* the affairs of state, and it is the height of folly to hide one's head under one's wing and refuse to see this. This government will have to enact an eight-hour working day, establish workers' inspection of factories, institute free universal education, introduce the election of judges, set up peasant committees, etc.; in a word, it will certainly have to carry out a number of reforms. To designate these reforms as "helping to spread the insurrection" would be playing with words and deliberately causing greater confusion in a matter which requires absolute clarity.

The concluding part of the new *Iskra*-ists' resolution does not provide any new material for a criticism of the trends of principles of "Economism" which has revived in

our Party, but it illustrates what has been said above from a somewhat different angle.

Here is that part:

"Only in one event should Social-Democracy, on its own initiative, direct its efforts towards seizing power and holding it as long as possible—namely, in the event of the revolution spreading to the advanced countries of Western Europe, where conditions for the achievement of Socialism have already reached a certain" (?) "degree of maturity. In that event the limited historical scope of the Russian revolution can be considerably widened and the possibility of entering the path of socialist reforms will arise.

"By framing its tactics in accordance with the view that, during the whole period of the revolution, the Social-Democratic Party will retain the position of extreme revolutionary opposition to all the governments that may succeed one another in the course of the revolution, Social-Democracy will best be able to prepare itself to utilize governmental power if it falls" (??) "into its hands."

The basic idea here is the one that the *Vperyod* has repeatedly formulated, stating that we must not be afraid (as is Martynov) of a complete victory for Social-Democracy in a democratic revolution, i.e., of a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry, for such a victory will enable us to rouse Europe, and the socialist proletariat of Europe, after throwing off the yoke of the bourgeoisie, will in its turn help us to accomplish the socialist revolution. But see how this idea is worsened in the new *Iskra*-ists' rendering of it. We shall not dwell on details—on the absurd assumption that power could "fall" into the hands of a class-conscious party which considers seizure of power harmful tactics; on the fact that in Europe the conditions for Socialism have reached not a certain degree of maturity, but are already mature; on the fact that our Party program does not speak of socialist changes at all, but only of a socialist revolution. Let us

take the principal and basic difference between the idea presented by the *Vperyod* and that presented in the resolution. The *Vperyod* set the revolutionary proletariat of Russia an active aim: to win the battle for democracy and to use this victory for carrying the revolution into Europe. The resolution fails to grasp this connection between our "decisive victory" (not in the new *Iskra* sense) and the revolution in Europe, and therefore it speaks not about the tasks of the proletariat, not about the prospects of *its* victory, but about one of the possibilities in general: "in the event of the revolution spreading..." The *Vperyod* pointedly and definitely indicated—and this was incorporated in the resolution of the Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party—how "governmental power" can and must "be utilized" in the interests of the proletariat, bearing in mind what can be achieved immediately, at the given stage of social development, and what must first be achieved as a democratic prerequisite of the struggle for Socialism. Here, also, the resolution hopelessly drags at the tail when it states: "will be able to prepare itself to utilize," but fails to say *how* it will be able, *how* it will prepare itself, and to utilize *for what*? We have no doubt, for instance, that the new *Iskra*-ists may be "able to prepare themselves to utilize" the leading position in the Party; but the point is that the way they have utilized, their preparation up till now, do not hold out much hope of possibility being transformed into reality...

The *Vperyod* quite definitely stated wherein lies the real "possibility of holding power"—namely, in the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry, in their joint mass strength, which is capable of outweighing all the forces of counterrevolution, in the inevitable concurrence of their interests in *democratic* changes. Here, too, the resolution of the Conference gives us nothing positive, it merely evades the question. Surely, the possibility of holding power in Russia must be deter-

mined by the composition of the social forces in Russia itself, by the circumstances of the democratic revolution which is now taking place in our country. A victory of the proletariat in Europe (it is still somewhat of a far cry between carrying the revolution into Europe and the victory of the proletariat) will give rise to a desperate counter-revolutionary struggle on the part of the Russian bourgeoisie—yet the resolution of the new *Iskra*-ists does not say a word about this counterrevolutionary force, the importance of which has been appraised in the resolution of the Third Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. If in our fight for a republic and democracy we could not rely upon the peasantry as well as on the proletariat, the prospect of our “holding power” would be hopeless. But if it is not hopeless, if a “decisive victory of the revolution over tsarism” opens up such a possibility, then we must point to it, we must actively call for its transformation into reality and issue practical slogans not only *for the contingency* of the revolution being carried into Europe, but also *for the purpose* of carrying it there. The reference made by the *khvostist* Social-Democrats to the “limited historical scope of the Russian revolution” merely serves to cover up their limited understanding of the aims of this democratic revolution and of the leading role of the proletariat in this revolution!

One of the objections raised to the slogan of “the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry” is that dictatorship presupposes a “single will” (*Iskra*, No. 95), and that there can be no single will of the proletariat and the petty bourgeoisie. This objection is unsound, for it is based on an abstract, “metaphysical” interpretation of the term “single will.” There can be a single will in one respect and not a single will in another. The absence of unity on questions of Socialism and in the struggle for Socialism does not preclude singleness of will on questions of democracy and in the struggle for a republic. To forget this would be tantamount to forgetting the logical



and historical difference between a democratic and a socialist revolution. To forget this would be tantamount to forgetting the character of the democratic revolution as a revolution *of the whole people*: if it is "of the whole people" it means that there is "singleness of will" precisely in so far as this revolution satisfies the common needs and requirements of the whole people. Beyond the bounds of democracy there can be no question of the proletariat and the peasant bourgeoisie having a single will. Class struggle between them is inevitable; but it is in a democratic republic that this struggle will be the most thoroughgoing and widespread struggle of the people *for Socialism*. Like everything else in the world, the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry has a past and a future. Its past is autocracy, serfdom, monarchy and privilege. In the struggle against this past, in the struggle against counterrevolution, a "single will" of the proletariat and the peasantry is possible, for here there is unity of interests.

Its future is the struggle against private property, the struggle of the wage worker against the employer, the struggle for Socialism. Here singleness of will is impossible.\* Here our path lies not from autocracy to a republic but from a petty-bourgeois democratic republic to Socialism.

Of course, in actual historical circumstances, the elements of the past become interwoven with those of the future, the two paths cross. Wage labour, with its struggle against private property, exists under the autocracy as well; it is generated even under serfdom. But this does not in the least prevent us from drawing a logical and historical dividing line between the major stages of development. We all draw a distinction between bourgeois revolution and so-

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\* The development of capitalism, which is more widespread and rapid where there is freedom, will inevitably put a speedy end to singleness of will; the sooner counterrevolution and reaction are crushed, the sooner will the singleness of will come to an end.

cialist revolution, we all absolutely insist on the necessity of drawing a most strict line between them; but can it be denied that individual, particular elements of the two revolutions become interwoven in history? Have there not been a number of socialist movements and attempts at establishing Socialism in the period of democratic revolutions in Europe? And will not the future socialist revolution in Europe still have to do a very great deal that has been left undone in the field of democracy?

A Social-Democrat must never for a moment forget that the proletariat will inevitably have to wage the class struggle for Socialism even against the most democratic and republican bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie. This is beyond doubt. Hence the absolute necessity of a separate, independent, strictly class party of Social-Democracy. Hence the temporary nature of our tactics of "striking jointly" with the bourgeoisie and the duty of keeping a strict watch "over our ally, as over an enemy," etc. All this is also beyond the slightest doubt. But it would be ridiculous and reactionary to deduce from this that we must forget, ignore or neglect these tasks which, although transient and temporary, are vital at the present time. The fight against the autocracy is a temporary and transient task of the Socialists, but to ignore or neglect this task in any way would be tantamount to betraying Socialism and rendering a service to reaction. The revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry is unquestionably only a transient, temporary aim of the Socialists, but to ignore this aim in the period of a democratic revolution would be downright reactionary.

Concrete political aims must be set in concrete circumstances. All things are relative, all things flow and all things change. The program of the German Social-Democratic Party does not contain the demand for a republic. The situation in Germany is such that this question can in practice hardly be separated from the question of Socialism

(although even as regards Germany, Engels, in his comments on the draft of the Erfurt Program in 1891, warned against belittling the importance of a republic and of the struggle for a republic!). In the Russian Social-Democratic Party the question of eliminating the demand for a republic from its program and agitation has never even arisen, for in our country there can be no talk of an indissoluble connection between the question of a republic and the question of Socialism. It was quite natural for a German Social-Democrat of 1898 not to put the special question of a republic in the forefront, and this evokes neither surprise nor condemnation. But a German Social-Democrat who in 1848 would have left the question of a republic in the shade would have been a downright traitor to the revolution. There is no such thing as abstract truth. Truth is always concrete.

The time will come when the struggle against the Russian autocracy will end and the period of democratic revolution will be over in Russia; then it will be ridiculous to talk about "singleness of will" of the proletariat and the peasantry, about a democratic dictatorship, etc. When that time comes we shall attend directly to the question of the socialist dictatorship of the proletariat and deal with it at greater length. But at present the party of the advanced class cannot but strive most energetically for a decisive victory of the democratic revolution over tsarism. And a decisive victory means nothing else than the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry.

#### NOTE

1) We would remind the reader that in the polemics between the *Iskra* and the *Vperyod*, the former referred among other things to Engels' letter to Turati, in which Engels warned the (future) leader of the Italian reformists not to confuse the democratic with the socialist revolution.

The impending revolution in Italy—wrote Engels about the political situation in Italy in 1894—will be a petty-bourgeois, democratic and not a socialist revolution. The *Iskra* reproached the *Vperyod* with having departed from the principle laid down by Engels. This reproach was unjustified, because the *Vperyod* (No. 14)\* fully acknowledged, on the whole, the correctness of Marx's theory of the difference between the three main forces in the revolutions of the nineteenth century. According to this theory, the following forces take a stand against the old order, against the autocracy, feudalism, serfdom: 1) the liberal big bourgeoisie, 2) the radical petty bourgeoisie, 3) the proletariat. The first fights for nothing more than a constitutional monarchy; the second, for a democratic republic; the third, for a socialist revolution. To confuse the petty-bourgeois struggle for a complete democratic revolution with the proletarian struggle for a socialist revolution spells political bankruptcy for a Socialist. Marx's warning to this effect is quite justified. But it is precisely for this very reason that the slogan "revolutionary communes" is erroneous, because the very mistake committed by the communes that have existed in history is that they confused the democratic revolution with the socialist revolution. On the other hand, our slogan—a revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry—fully safeguards us against this mistake. While recognizing the incontestably bourgeois nature of the revolution, which is incapable of *directly* overstepping the bounds of a mere democratic revolution, our slogan *pushes forward* this particular revolution and strives to mould it into forms most advantageous to the proletariat; consequently, it strives to make the very most of the democratic revolution in order to attain the greatest success in the further struggle of the proletariat for Socialism.

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\* See Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. VIII, pp. 247-63.—Ed.

## 11. A CURSORY COMPARISON BETWEEN SEVERAL OF THE RESOLUTIONS OF THE THIRD CONGRESS OF THE R.S.D.L.P. AND THOSE OF THE "CONFERENCE"

The question of the provisional revolutionary government is the pivot of the tactical questions of the Social-Democratic movement at the present time. It is neither possible nor necessary to dwell in as great detail on the other resolutions of the Conference. We shall confine ourselves merely to indicating briefly a few points which confirm the difference in principle, analyzed above, between the tactical trends of the resolutions of the Third Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. and those of the Conference resolutions.

Take the question of the attitude towards the tactics of the government on the eve of the revolution. Once again you will find a comprehensive answer to this question in one of the resolutions of the Third Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. This resolution takes into consideration all the multifarious conditions and tasks of the particular moment: the exposure of the hypocrisy of the government's concessions, the utilization of "travesties of popular representation," the achievement by revolutionary means of the urgent demands of the working class (the principal one being the eight-hour working day), and, finally, resistance to the Black Hundreds. In the Conference resolutions this question is scattered over several sections: "resistance to the dark forces of reaction" is mentioned only in the preamble of the resolution on the attitude to other parties. Participation in elections to representative bodies is considered separately from the question of "compromises" between tsarism and the bourgeoisie. Instead of calling for the achievement of an eight-hour working day by revolutionary means, a special resolution, with the high-sounding title "On the Economic Struggle," merely repeats (after high-flown and very stupid phrases about "the central place occupied by the

labour question in the public life of Russia") the old slogan of agitation for "the legislative institution of an eight-hour working day." The inadequacy and the belatedness of this slogan at the present time are too obvious to require proof.

The question of open political action. The Third Congress takes into consideration the impending *radical* change in our activity. Secret activity and the development of the secret apparatus must on no account be abandoned: this would be playing into the hands of the police and be of the utmost advantage to the government. But at the same time we cannot start too soon thinking about open action as well. Expedient forms of such action and, consequently, special apparatus—less secret—must be *prepared* immediately for this purpose. The legal and semilegal societies must be made use of with a view to transforming them, as far as possible, into bases of the future open Social-Democratic Labour Party in Russia.

Here too the Conference divides up the question, and fails to issue any integral slogans. There bobs up as a separate point the ridiculous instruction to the Organization Commission to see to the "placing" of its legally functioning publicists. There is the wholly absurd decision "to subordinate to its influence the democratic newspapers that set themselves the aim of rendering assistance to the working-class movement." This is the professed aim of all our legal liberal newspapers, nearly all of which are of the *Osvobozhdeniye* trend. Why should not the editors of the *Iskra* make a start themselves in carrying out their advice and give us an example of how to subject the *Osvobozhdeniye* to Social-Democratic influence?... Instead of the slogan of utilizing the legally existing unions for the purpose of establishing bases for the *Party*, we are given, first, particular advice about the "trade" unions only (that all Party members must join them) and, secondly, advice to guide "the revolutionary organizations of the workers"="organizations not officially constituted"="revolutionary workers' clubs."

How these "clubs" come to be classed as unofficially constituted organizations, what these "clubs" really are—goodness only knows. Instead of definite and clear instructions from a supreme Party body, we have some jottings of ideas and the rough drafts of publicists. We get no complete picture of the beginning of the Party's transition to an entirely new basis in all its work.

The "peasant question" was presented by the Party Congress and by the Conference in entirely different ways. The Congress drew up a resolution on the "attitude to the peasant movement," the Conference on "work among the peasants." In the one case prime importance is attached to the task of guiding the widespread revolutionary-democratic movement in the general national interests of the fight against tsarism. In the other instance, the question is reduced to mere "work" among a particular section of society. In the one case, a central practical slogan for our agitation is advanced, calling for the immediate organization of revolutionary peasant committees in order to carry out all the democratic changes. In the other, a "demand for the organization of committees" is to be presented to a constituent assembly. Why must we wait for this constituent assembly? Will it really be constituent? Will it be stable without the preliminary and simultaneous establishment of revolutionary peasant committees? All these questions are ignored by the Conference. All its decisions reflect the general idea which we have traced—namely, that in the bourgeois revolution we must do only our special work, without setting ourselves the aim of leading the entire democratic movement and of doing this independently. Just as the Economists constantly harped on the idea that the Social-Democrats should concern themselves with the economic struggle, leaving it to the liberals to take care of the political struggle, so the new *Iskra*-ists keep harping in all their discussions on the idea that we should creep into a modest corner out of the way of the bourgeois revolution,

leaving it to the bourgeoisie to do the active work of carrying out the revolution.

Finally, we cannot but note also the resolution on the attitude toward other parties. The resolution of the Third Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. speaks of exposing all the limitations and inadequacies of the bourgeois movement for emancipation, without entertaining the naive idea of enumerating every possible instance of such limitation from congress to congress or of drawing a line of distinction between bad bourgeois and good bourgeois. The Conference, repeating the mistake made by Starover, persistently searched for such a line, developed the famous "litmus paper" theory. Starover started from a very good idea: to put the strictest possible terms to the bourgeoisie. Only he forgot that any attempt to separate in advance the bourgeois democrats who are worthy of approval, agreements, etc., from those who are unworthy leads to a "formula" which is immediately thrown overboard by the development of events and which introduces confusion into the proletarian class consciousness. The emphasis is shifted from real unity in the struggle to declarations, promises, slogans. Starover was of the opinion that "universal and equal suffrage, direct elections and secret ballot" was such a radical slogan. But before two years elapsed the "litmus paper" proved its worthlessness, the slogan of universal suffrage was taken over by the *Osvobozhdentsi*, who not only came no closer to Social-Democracy as a result of this, but, on the contrary, tried by means of this very slogan to mislead the workers and divert them from Socialism.

Now the new *Iskra*-ists are setting "terms" that are even "stricter," they are "demanding" from the enemies of tsarism "energetic and unequivocal" (!?) "support of every determined action of the organized proletariat," etc., up to and including "active participation in the self-armament of the people." The line has been drawn much further—but nonetheless this line is *again already obsolete*, it revealed its



worthlessness at once. Why, for instance, is there no slogan of a republic? How is it that the Social-Democrats—in the interest of “relentless revolutionary war against all the foundations of the system of social estates and the monarchy”—“demand” from the bourgeois democrats anything you like except a fight for a republic?

That this question is not mere captiousness, that the mistake of the new *Iskra*-ists is of most vital political significance is proved by the “Russian Liberation League” (see *Proletary*, No. 4).<sup>\*</sup> These “enemies of tsarism” will fully meet all the “requirements” of the new *Iskra*-ists. And yet we have shown that the spirit of *Osvobozhdeniye* reigns in the program (or lack of program) of this “Russian Liberation League” and that the *Osvobozhdentsi* can easily take it in tow. The Conference, however, declares in the concluding section of the resolution that “Social-Democracy will continue to oppose the *hypocritical friends of the people*, all those political parties which, though they display a liberal and democratic banner, refuse to render genuine support to the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat.” The “Russian Liberation League” not only does not refuse this support but offers it most insistently. Is that a guarantee that the leaders of this League are not “hypocritical friends of the people,” even though they are *Osvobozhdentsi*?

You see: by inventing “terms” in advance and presenting “demands” which are ludicrous by reason of their grim impotence, the new *Iskra*-ists immediately put themselves

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<sup>\*</sup> *Proletary*, No. 4, which appeared on June 4, 1905, contained a lengthy article entitled “A New Revolutionary Labour League” (see Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. VIII, pp. 465-76.—*Ed.*). The article gives the contents of the appeals issued by this league which assumed the name of “Russian Liberation League” and which set itself the aim of convening a constituent assembly with the aid of an armed insurrection. Further, the article defines the attitude of the Social-Democrats to such non-Party leagues. How far this league really existed, and what its fate was in the revolution is absolutely unknown to us. (Author’s note to the 1907 edition.—*Ed.*)

in a ridiculous position. Their terms and demands immediately prove inadequate when it comes to gauging living realities. Their chase after formulae is hopeless, for no formula can embrace all the various manifestations of hypocrisy, inconsistency and limitations of the bourgeois democrats. It is not a matter of "litmus paper," of forms, or written and printed demands, nor is it a matter of drawing, in advance, a line of distinction between hypocritical and sincere "friends of the people"; it is a matter of real unity in the struggle, of unabating criticism by Social-Democrats of every "uncertain" step taken by bourgeois democracy. What is needed for a "genuine consolidation of all the social forces interested in democratic change" is not the "points" over which the Conference laboured so assiduously and so vainly, but the ability to put forward genuinely revolutionary slogans. For this slogans are needed that will raise the revolutionary and republican bourgeoisie to the level of the proletariat and not reduce the aims of the proletariat to the level of the monarchist bourgeoisie. For this the most energetic participation in the insurrection and not sophist evasions of the urgent task of armed insurrection is needed.

## 12. WILL THE SWEEP OF THE DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION BE DIMINISHED IF THE BOURGEOISIE RECOILS FROM IT?

The foregoing lines were already written when we received a copy of the resolutions adopted by the Caucasian Conference of the new *Iskra*-ists, published by the *Iskra*. Better material than this pour la bonne bouche (for dessert) we could not even have invented.

The editors of the *Iskra* quite justly remark: "On the fundamental question of tactics, the Caucasian Conference also arrived at a decision *analogous*" (in truth!) "to the one adopted by the All-Russian Conference" (i.e., of the

new *Iskra*-ists). "The question of the attitude of Social-Democracy towards a provisional revolutionary government has been settled by the Caucasian comrades in the spirit of most outspoken opposition to the new method advocated by the *Vperyod* group and by the delegates of the so-called Congress who joined it." "It must be admitted that the formulation of the tactics of the proletarian party in a bourgeois revolution as given by the Conference is *very apt*."

What is true is true. No one could have given a more "apt" formulation of the fundamental error of the new *Iskra*-ists. We shall quote this formulation in full, indicating in parentheses first the blossoms and then the fruit presented at the end.

Here is the resolution of the Caucasian Conference of new *Iskra*-ists on a provisional revolutionary government:

"Whereas we consider it to be our task to take advantage of the revolutionary situation to render more profound" (of course! They should have added: "à la Martynov!") "the Social-Democratic consciousness of the proletariat" (only to render the consciousness more profound, and not to win a republic? What a "profound" conception of revolution!) "and in order to secure for the Party fullest freedom to criticize the nascent bourgeois-state system" (it is not our business to secure a republic! Our business is only to secure freedom of criticism. Anarchist ideas give rise to anarchist language: "bourgeois-state" system!), "the Conference declares against the formation of a Social-Democratic provisional government and joining such a government" (recall the resolution passed by the Bakunists ten months before the Spanish revolution and referred to by Engels: see the *Proletary*, No. 3), "and considers it to be the most expedient course to exercise pressure from without" (from below and not from above) "upon the bourgeois provisional government in order to secure a feasible measure" (?) "of democratization of the state system. The Conference believes that the formation of a provisional government by Social-Demo-

crats, or their joining such a government, would lead, on the one hand, to the masses of the proletariat becoming disappointed in the Social-Democratic Party and abandoning it because the Social-Democrats, in spite of the fact that they had seized power, would not be able to satisfy the pressing needs of the working class, including the establishment of Socialism" (a republic is not a pressing need! The authors, in their innocence, do not notice that they are speaking a purely anarchist language, as if they were repudiating participation in bourgeois revolutions!), "and, on the other hand, *will cause the bourgeois classes to recoil from the revolution and thus diminish its sweep.*"

That is where the trouble lies. That is where anarchist ideas become interwoven (as is constantly the case among the West-European Bernsteinians also) with the purest opportunism. Just think of it: not to join a provisional government because this will cause the bourgeoisie to recoil from the revolution and thus diminish the sweep of the revolution! Here, indeed, we have the new *Iskra* philosophy in its complete, pure and consistent form: the revolution is a bourgeois revolution, therefore we must bow down to bourgeois philistinism and make way for it. If we are guided, even in part, even for a moment, by the consideration that our participation may cause the bourgeoisie to recoil, we thereby simply yield leadership in the revolution entirely to the bourgeois classes. We thereby place the proletariat entirely under the tutelage of the bourgeoisie (while retaining complete "freedom of criticism"!!), compelling the proletariat to be meek and mild so as not to cause the bourgeoisie to recoil. We emasculate the most vital needs of the proletariat, namely, its political needs—which the Economists and their epigones have never properly understood—so as not to cause the bourgeoisie to recoil. We completely abandon the field of revolutionary struggle for the achievement of democracy to the extent required by the proletariat for the field of bargaining with

the bourgeoisie, betraying our principles, betraying the revolution to purchase the bourgeoisie's voluntary consent ("that it might not recoil").

In two brief lines, the Caucasian new *Iskra*-ists managed to express the quintessence of the tactics of betrayal of the revolution and of converting the proletariat into a wretched appendage of the bourgeois classes. The tendency, which we traced above to the mistakes of the new *Iskra*-ists, now stands out before us as a clear and definite principle, viz., to drag at the tail of the monarchist bourgeoisie. Since the establishment of a republic would cause (and is already causing; Mr. Struve, for example) the bourgeoisie to recoil, therefore, down with the fight for a republic. Since every resolute and consistent democratic demand of the proletariat always and everywhere in the world causes the bourgeoisie to recoil, therefore, hide in your lairs, comrades and fellow workers, act only from without, do not dream of using the instruments and weapons of the "bourgeois-state" system in the interests of the revolution, and reserve for yourselves "freedom to criticize"!

Here the fundamental fallacy of their very conception of the term "bourgeois revolution" has come to the surface. The Martynov or new *Iskra* "conception" of this term leads straight to a betrayal of the cause of the proletariat to the bourgeoisie.

Those who have forgotten the old Economism, those who do not study it or remember it, will find it difficult to understand the present echo of Economism. Recall the Bernsteinian *Credo*.<sup>12</sup> From "purely proletarian" views and programs, people arrived at the conclusion: we, the Social-Democrats, must concern ourselves with economics, with the real cause of labour, with freedom to criticize all political chicanery, with rendering Social-Democratic work really more profound. Politics are for the liberals. God save us from dropping into "revolutionism": that will cause the bourgeoisie to recoil. Those who read the whole *Credo* over again or the Supple-

ment to No. 9 of the *Rabochaya Mysl* (September 1899), will be able to follow this entire line of reasoning.

Today we have the same thing, only on a large scale, applied to an appraisal of the whole of the "great" Russian revolution—alas, already vulgarized and reduced to a travesty in advance by the theoreticians of orthodox philistinism! We, the Social-Democrats, must concern ourselves with freedom of criticism, with rendering class consciousness more profound, with action from without. They, the bourgeois classes, must have freedom to act, a free field for revolutionary (read: liberal) leadership, freedom to put through "reforms" from above.

These vulgarizers of Marxism have never pondered over what Marx said about the need of substituting the criticism of weapons for the weapon of criticism. Taking the name of Marx in vain, they, in actual fact, draw up resolutions on tactics wholly in the spirit of the Frankfurt bourgeois windbags, who freely criticized absolutism and rendered democratic consciousness more profound, but failed to understand that the time of revolution is the time of action, of action both from above and from below. Having converted Marxism into pedantry, they have made the ideology of the advanced, most determined and energetic revolutionary class the ideology of its most undeveloped strata, which shrink from the difficult revolutionary-democratic tasks and leave it to Messrs. the Struves to take care of these democratic tasks.

If the bourgeois classes recoil from the revolution because the Social-Democrats join the revolutionary government, they will thereby "diminish the sweep" of the revolution.

Listen to this, Russian workers: The sweep of the revolution will be mightier if it is carried out by Messrs. the Struves, who are not frightened away by the Social-Democrats and who want, not victory over tsarism, but to come to terms with it. The sweep of the revolution will be mightier

if, of the two possible outcomes which we have outlined above, the first eventuates, i.e., if the monarchist bourgeoisie comes to terms with the autocracy concerning a "constitution" à la Shipov!

Social-Democrats who write such disgraceful things in resolutions intended for the guidance of the whole Party, or who approve of such "apt" resolutions, are so blinded by their pedantry, which has utterly eroded the living spirit out of Marxism, that they do not see how these resolutions convert all their other fine words into mere phrasemongering. Take any of their articles in the *Iskra*, or take even the notorious pamphlet written by our celebrated Martynov—you will read there about a *popular* insurrection, about carrying the revolution to *completion*, about striving to rely upon the *common people* in the fight against the inconsistent bourgeoisie. But then all these excellent things become miserable phrasemongering immediately you accept or approve of the idea that "the sweep of the revolution" will be "diminished" as a consequence of the alienation of the bourgeoisie. One of two things, gentlemen: either we, together with the people, must strive to carry out the revolution and win a complete victory over tsarism *in spite of* the inconsistent, self-seeking and cowardly bourgeoisie, or we do not accept this "in spite of," we fear lest the bourgeoisie "recoil" from the revolution, in which case we betray the proletariat and the people to the bourgeoisie—to the inconsistent, self-seeking and cowardly bourgeoisie.

Don't try to misinterpret what I have said. Don't start howling that you are being accused of deliberate treachery. No, you have always been crawling and have at last crawled into the mire as unconsciously as the Economists of old, drawn inexorably and irrevocably down the inclined plane of making Marxism "more profound" to antirevolutionary, soulless and lifeless "philosophizing."

Have you ever considered, gentlemen, what real social forces determine "the sweep of the revolution"? Let us leave

aside the forces of foreign politics, of international combinations, which have turned out very favourably for us at the present time, but which we all leave out of our discussion, and rightly so, inasmuch as we are concerned with the question of the internal forces of Russia. Look at these internal social forces. Aligned against the revolution are the autocracy, the imperial court, the police, the bureaucracy, the army and the handful of high nobility. The deeper the indignation of the people grows, the less reliable become the troops, and the more the bureaucracy wavers. Moreover, the bourgeoisie, on the whole, is now in favour of the revolution, is zealously making speeches about liberty holding forth more and more frequently in the name of the people, and even in the name of the revolution.\* But we Marxists all know from theory and from daily and hourly observation of our liberals, Zemstvo-ists and *Osvobozhdenstsi* that the bourgeoisie is inconsistent, self-seeking and cowardly in its support of the revolution. The bourgeoisie, in the mass, will inevitably turn towards counterrevolution, towards the autocracy, against the revolution and against the people, immediately its narrow, selfish interests are met, immediately it "recoils" from consistent democracy (*and it is already recoiling from it!*). There remains the "people," that is, the proletariat and the peasantry: the proletariat alone can be relied on to march to the end, for it is going far beyond the democratic revolution. That is why the proletariat fights in the front ranks for a republic and contemptuously rejects silly and unworthy advice to take care not to frighten away the bourgeoisie. The peasantry includes a great number of semiproletarian as well as petty-bourgeois elements. This causes it also to be unstable and compels the proletariat to unite in a strictly class party. But the instability of the peas-

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\* Of interest in this connection is Mr. Struve's open letter to Jaurès, recently published by the latter in *L'Humanité* and by Mr. Struve in the *Osvobozhdeniye* No. 72.



antry differs radically from the instability of the bourgeoisie, for at the present time the peasantry is interested not so much in the absolute preservation of private property as in the confiscation of the landed estates, one of the principal forms of private property. While this does not make the peasantry become socialist or cease to be petty-bourgeois, it is capable of becoming a wholehearted and most radical adherent of the democratic revolution. The peasantry will inevitably become such if only the progress of revolutionary events, which is enlightening it, is not checked too soon by the treachery of the bourgeoisie and the defeat of the proletariat. Subject to this condition, the peasantry will inevitably become a bulwark of the revolution and the republic, for only a completely victorious revolution can give the peasantry *everything* in the sphere of agrarian reforms—*everything* that the peasants desire, of which they dream, and of which they truly stand in need (not for the abolition of capitalism as the “Socialist-Revolutionaries” imagine, but) in order to emerge from the mire of semiserfdom, from the gloom of oppression and servitude, in order to improve their living conditions as much as it is possible to improve them under the system of commodity production.

Moreover, the peasantry is attached to the revolution not only by the prospect of radical agrarian reform but by its general and permanent interests. Even in the struggle side by side with the proletariat the peasantry stands in need of democracy, for only a democratic system is capable of giving exact expression to its interests and of ensuring its predominance as the mass, as the majority. The more enlightened the peasantry becomes (and since the war with Japan it is becoming enlightened much more rapidly than those who are accustomed to measure enlightenment by the school standard suspect), the more consistently and determinedly will it favour a thoroughgoing democratic revolution; for, unlike the bourgeoisie, it has nothing to fear from the supremacy of the people, but, on the contrary,

stands to gain by it. A democratic republic will become the ideal of the peasantry as soon as it begins to free itself from its naive monarchism, because the enlightened monarchism of the bourgeois stockjobbers (with an upper chamber, etc.) implies for the peasantry the same disfranchisement and the same downtroddenness and ignorance as it suffers from today, only slightly glossed over with the varnish of European constitutionalism.

That is why the bourgeoisie as a class naturally and inevitably strives to come under the wing of the liberal-monarchist party, while the peasantry, in the mass, strives to come under the leadership of the revolutionary and republican party. That is why the bourgeoisie is incapable of carrying the democratic revolution to its consummation, while the peasantry is capable of doing so, and we must exert all our efforts to help it to do so.

It may be objected: but this requires no proof, this is all ABC; all Social-Democrats understand this perfectly well. But that is not so. It is not understood by those who can talk about "the sweep" of the revolution being "diminished" because the bourgeoisie will fall away from it. Such people repeat the words of our agrarian program that they have learned by rote without understanding their meaning, for otherwise they would not be frightened by the concept of the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry, which inevitably follows from the entire Marxian world outlook and from our program; otherwise they would not restrict the sweep of the great Russian revolution to the limits to which the bourgeoisie is prepared to go. Such people defeat their abstract Marxian revolutionary phrases by their concrete anti-Marxian and antirevolutionary resolutions.

Those who really understand the role of the peasantry in a victorious Russian revolution would not dream of saying that the sweep of the revolution would be diminished if the bourgeoisie recoiled from it. For, as a matter of fact, the

Russian revolution will begin to assume its real sweep, will really assume the widest revolutionary sweep possible in the epoch of bourgeois-democratic revolution, only when the bourgeoisie recoils from it and when the masses of the peasantry come out as active revolutionaries side by side with the proletariat. In order that it may be consistently carried to its conclusion, our democratic revolution must rely on such forces as are capable of paralyzing the inevitable inconsistency of the bourgeoisie (i.e., capable precisely of "causing it to recoil from the revolution," which the Caucasian adherents of *Iskra* fear so much because of their lack of judgment).

*The proletariat must carry to completion the democratic revolution, by allying to itself the mass of the peasantry in order to crush by force the resistance of the autocracy and to paralyze the instability of the bourgeoisie. The proletariat must accomplish the socialist revolution, by allying to itself the mass of the semiproletarian elements of the population in order to crush by force the resistance of the bourgeoisie and to paralyze the instability of the peasantry and the petty bourgeoisie.* Such are the tasks of the proletariat, which the new *Iskra*-ists present so narrowly in all their arguments and resolutions about the sweep of the revolution.

One circumstance, however, must not be forgotten, although it is frequently lost sight of in discussions about the "sweep" of the revolution. It must not be forgotten that the point at issue is not the difficulties this problem presents, but the road along which we must seek and attain its solution. The point is not whether it is easy or difficult to make the sweep of the revolution mighty and invincible, but how we must act in order to make this sweep more powerful. It is precisely on the fundamental nature of our activity, on the direction it should take, that our views differ. We emphasize this because careless and unscrupulous people too frequently confuse two different questions, namely, the ques-

tion of the direction in which the road leads, i.e., the selection of one of two different roads, and the question of how easily the goal can be reached, or of how near the goal is on the given road.

We have not dealt with this last question at all in the foregoing because it has not evoked any disagreement or divergency in the Party. But it goes without saying that the question itself is extremely important and deserves the most serious attention of all Social-Democrats. It would be a piece of unpardonable optimism to forget the difficulties which accompany the task of drawing into the movement the masses not only of the working class, but also of the peasantry. These difficulties have more than once been the rock against which the efforts to carry a democratic revolution to completion have been wrecked; and it was the inconsistent and self-seeking bourgeoisie which triumphed most of all, because it "made capital" in the shape of monarchist protection against the people, and at the same time "preserved the virginity" of liberalism . . . or of the *Osvobozhdeniye* trend. But difficult does not mean impossible. The important thing is to be convinced that the path chosen is the correct one, and this conviction will multiply a hundredfold the revolutionary energy and revolutionary enthusiasm which can perform miracles.

How deep is the disagreement among present-day Social-Democrats on the question of the path to be chosen can be seen at once by comparing the Caucasian resolution of the new *Iskra*-ists with the resolution of the Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party. The Congress resolution says: the bourgeoisie is inconsistent, it will certainly try to deprive us of the gains of the revolution. Therefore, make more energetic preparations for the fight, comrades and fellow workers! Arm yourselves, win the peasantry to your side! We shall not surrender our revolutionary gains to the self-seeking bourgeoisie without a fight. The resolution of the Caucasian new *Iskra*-ists says: the

bourgeoisie is inconsistent, it may recoil from the revolution. Therefore, comrades and fellow workers, please do not think of joining a provisional government, for, if you do, the bourgeoisie will certainly recoil, and the sweep of the revolution will thereby be diminished!

One side says: push the revolution forward, to its consummation, in spite of the resistance or the passivity of the inconsistent bourgeoisie.

The other side says: do not think of carrying the revolution to completion independently, for if you do, the inconsistent bourgeoisie will recoil from it.

Are these not two diametrically opposite paths? Is it not obvious that one set of tactics absolutely excludes the other? That the first tactics are the only correct tactics of revolutionary Social-Democracy, while the second are in fact purely *Osvobozhdeniye* tactics?

### 13. CONCLUSION. DARE WE WIN?

People who are superficially acquainted with the state of affairs in Russian Social-Democracy, or who judge as mere onlookers without knowing the whole history of our internal Party struggle since the days of Economism, very often also dismiss the disagreements on tactics which have now become crystallized, especially after the Third Congress, with the simple argument that there are two natural, inevitable and quite reconcilable trends in every Social-Democratic movement. One side, they say, lays special emphasis on the ordinary, current, everyday work, on the necessity of developing propaganda and agitation, of preparing forces, deepening the movement, etc., while the other side lays emphasis on the militant, general political, revolutionary tasks of the movement, points to the necessity of armed insurrection, advances the slogans: for a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship, for a provisional revolutionary

government. Neither one side nor the other should exaggerate, they say; extremes are bad, both here and there (and; generally speaking, everywhere in the world), etc., etc.

The cheap truisms of worldly (and "political" in quotation marks) wisdom, which such arguments undoubtedly contain, too often cover up a failure to understand the urgent and acute needs of the Party. Take the differences on tactics that now exist among the Russian Social-Democrats. Of course, the special emphasis laid on the everyday, routine aspect of the work, such as we observe in the new *Iskra*-ist arguments about tactics, could not in itself present any danger and could not give rise to any divergence of opinion regarding tactical slogans. But the moment you compare the resolutions of the Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party with the resolutions of the Conference this divergence becomes strikingly obvious.

What, then, is the trouble? The trouble is that, in the first place, it is not enough to point abstractly to the two currents in the movement and to the harmfulness of extremes. One must know concretely what the given movement is suffering from at the given time, what constitutes the real political danger to the Party at the present time. Secondly, one must know what real political forces are profiting by this or that tactical slogan—or perhaps by the absence of this or that slogan. To listen to the new *Iskra*-ists, one would arrive at the conclusion that the Social-Democratic Party is threatened with the danger of throwing overboard propaganda and agitation, the economic struggle and criticism of bourgeois democracy, of becoming inordinately absorbed in military preparations, armed attacks, the seizure of power, etc. Actually, however, real danger is threatening the Party from an entirely different quarter. Anyone who is at all closely familiar with the state of the movement, anyone who follows it carefully and thoughtfully, cannot fail to see the ridiculous side of the new *Iskra*'s fears. The entire work of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party has already

been fully moulded into firm, immutable forms which absolutely guarantee that our main attention will be fixed on propaganda and agitation, impromptu and mass meetings, on the distribution of leaflets and pamphlets, assisting in the economic struggle and championing the slogans of that struggle. There is not a single Party committee, not a single district committee, not a single central delegates' meeting or a single factory group where ninety-nine per cent of all the attention, energy and time are not always and constantly devoted to these functions, which have become firmly established ever since the middle of the 'nineties. Only those who are entirely unfamiliar with the movement are ignorant of this. Only very naive or ill-informed people can be taken in by the new *Iskra*-ists' repetition of stale truths when it is done with an air of great importance.

The fact is that not only is no excessive zeal displayed among us with regard to the tasks of insurrection, to the general political slogans and to the matter of leading the entire popular revolution, but, on the contrary, it is *backwardness* in this very respect that stands out most strikingly, constitutes our weakest spot and a real danger to the movement, which may degenerate, and in some places is degenerating, from one that is revolutionary in deeds into one that is revolutionary in words. Among the many, many hundreds of organizations, groups and circles that are conducting the work of the Party you will not find a single one which has not from its very inception conducted the kind of everyday work about which the wiseacres of the new *Iskra* now talk with the air of people who have discovered new truths. On the other hand, you will find only an insignificant percentage of groups and circles that have understood the tasks an armed insurrection entails, which have begun to carry them out, and have realized the necessity of leading the entire popular revolution against tsarism, the necessity of advancing for that purpose certain definite progressive slogans and no other.

We are incredibly behind in our progressive and genuinely revolutionary tasks, in very many instances we have not even become conscious of them; here and there we have failed to notice the strengthening of revolutionary bourgeois democracy owing to our backwardness in this respect. But the writers in the new *Iskra*, turning their backs on the course of events and on the requirements of the times, keep repeating insistently: Don't forget the old! Don't let yourselves be carried away by the new! This is the principal and unvarying leitmotif of all the important resolutions of the Conference; whereas in the Congress resolutions you just as unvaryingly read: while confirming the old (and without stopping to chew it over and over, for the very reason that it is old and has already been settled and recorded in literature, in resolutions and by experience), we put forward a new task, draw attention to it, issue a new slogan, and demand that the genuinely revolutionary Social-Democrats immediately set to work to put it into effect.

That is how matters really stand with regard to the question of the two trends in Social-Democratic tactics. The revolutionary period has called forth new tasks, which only the totally blind can fail to see. And some Social-Democrats unhesitatingly recognize these tasks and place them on the order of the day, declaring: the armed insurrection brooks no delay, prepare yourselves for it immediately and energetically, remember that it is indispensable for a decisive victory, issue the slogans of a republic, of a provisional government, of a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. Others, however, draw back, mark time, write prefaces instead of giving slogans; instead of pointing to the new while confirming the old, they chew this old tediously and at great length, inventing pretexts to avoid the new, unable to determine the conditions for a decisive victory or to issue the slogans which alone are in line with the striving to attain complete victory.



The political result of this *khvostism* stares us in the face. The fable about a rapprochement between the "majority" of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party and the revolutionary bourgeois democracy remains a fable which has not been confirmed by a single political fact, by a single important resolution of the "Bolsheviks" or a single act of the Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party. On the other hand, the opportunist, monarchist bourgeoisie, as represented by the *Osvobozhdeniye*, has long been *welcoming* the trends of the "principles" of new *Iskra*-ism and now it is actually running its mill with their grist, is adopting their catchwords and "ideas" directed against "secrecy" and "riots," against exaggerating the "technical" side of the revolution, against openly proclaiming the slogan of armed insurrection, against the "revolutionism" of extreme demands, etc., etc. The resolution of a whole conference of "Menshevik" Social-Democrats in the Caucasus, and the endorsement of that resolution by the editors of the new *Iskra*, sums it all up politically in an unmistakable way: lest the bourgeoisie recoil if the proletariat takes part in a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship! This puts it in a nutshell. This gives the finishing touch to the transformation of the proletariat into an appendage of the monarchist bourgeoisie. The *political meaning* of the *khvostism* of the new *Iskra* is thereby proved in fact, not by a casual declaration of some individual, but by a resolution especially endorsed by a whole trend.

Anyone who ponders over these facts will understand the real significance of the stock reference to the two sides and the two trends in the Social-Democratic movement. For a study of these trends on a large scale, take Bernsteinism. The Bernsteinians have been dinning into our ears in exactly the same way that it is they who understand the true needs of the proletariat, the tasks connected with the growth of its forces, with rendering the entire activity more profound, with preparing the elements of a new society, with

propaganda and agitation! Bernstein says: we demand a frank recognition of what is, thus sanctifying a "movement" *without* "final aims," sanctifying defensive tactics only, preaching the tactics of fear "lest the bourgeoisie recoil." The Bernsteinians also raised an outcry against the "Jacobinism" of the revolutionary Social-Democrats, against the "publicists" who fail to understand the "initiative of the workers," etc., etc. In reality, as everyone knows, the revolutionary Social-Democrats have never even thought of abandoning the everyday, petty work, the mustering of forces, etc., etc. All they demanded was a clear understanding of the final aim, a clear presentation of the revolutionary tasks; they wanted to raise the semiproletarian and semi-petty-bourgeois strata to the revolutionary level of the proletariat, not to reduce this level to that of opportunist considerations such as "lest the bourgeoisie recoil." Perhaps the most vivid expression of this rift between the intellectual opportunist wing and the proletarian revolutionary wing of the Party was the question: dürfen wir siegen? "Dare we win?" Is it permissible for us to win? Would it not be dangerous for us to win? Ought we to win? This question, which seems so strange at first sight, was raised, however, and had to be raised, because the opportunists were afraid of victory, were frightening the proletariat away from it, were predicting that trouble would come of it, were ridiculing the slogans that straightforwardly called for it.

The same fundamental division into an intellectual-opportunist and proletarian-revolutionary trend exists also among us, with the very material difference, however, that here we are faced with the question of a democratic revolution, and not of a socialist revolution. The question "dare we win?" which seems so absurd at first sight, has been raised among us also. It was raised by Martynov in his *Two Dictatorships*, in which he prophesied dire misfortune if we prepare well for and carry out an insurrection quite successfully. The question has been raised in all the new

*Iskra* literature dealing with a provisional revolutionary government, and all the time persistent though futile efforts have been made to liken Millerand's participation in a bourgeois-opportunist government to Varlin's participation in a petty-bourgeois revolutionary government. It is embodied in a resolution: "lest the bourgeoisie recoil." And although Kautsky, for instance, now tries to wax ironical and says that our dispute about a provisional revolutionary government is like dividing the skin of a bear before the bear has been killed, this irony only proves that even clever and revolutionary Social-Democrats are liable to put their foot in it when they talk about something they know of only by hearsay. German Social-Democracy is not yet so near to killing its bear (carrying out a socialist revolution), but the dispute as to whether we "dare" kill the bear was of enormous importance from the point of view of principles and of practical politics. Russian Social-Democrats are not yet so near to being strong enough to "kill their bear" (to carry out a democratic revolution), but the question as to whether we "dare" kill it is of extreme importance for the whole future of Russia and for the future of Russian Social-Democracy. An army cannot be energetically and successfully mustered and led unless we are sure that we "dare" win.

Take our old Economists. They too howled that their opponents were conspirators, Jacobins (see the *Rabocheye Deyelo*, especially No. 10, and Martynov's speech in the debate on the program at the Second Congress), that by plunging into politics they were divorcing themselves from the masses, that they were losing sight of the fundamentals of the working-class movement, ignoring the initiative of the workers, etc., etc. In reality these supporters of the "initiative of the workers" were opportunist intellectuals who tried to foist on the workers their own narrow and philistine conception of the tasks of the proletariat. In reality the opponents of Economism, as everyone can see from the old *Iskra*, did not neglect or push into the background any of the aspects

of Social-Democratic work, nor did they in the least forget the economic struggle; but they were able at the same time to present the urgent and immediate political tasks in their full scope and they opposed the transformation of the workers' party into an "economic" appendage of the liberal bourgeoisie.

The Economists had learned by rote that politics are based on economics and "understood" this to mean that the political struggle should be reduced to the level of the economic struggle. The new *Iskra*-ists have learned by rote that the economic basis of the democratic revolution is the bourgeois revolution, and "understood" this to mean that the democratic aims of the proletariat should be degraded to the level of bourgeois moderation, to the limits beyond which "the bourgeoisie will recoil." On the pretext of rendering their work more profound, on the pretext of rousing the initiative of the workers and pursuing a purely class policy, the Economists were actually delivering the working class into the hands of the liberal-bourgeois politicians, i.e., were leading the Party along a path which objectively meant exactly that. On the same pretexts, the new *Iskra*-ists are actually betraying the interests of the proletariat in the democratic revolution to the bourgeoisie, i.e., are leading the Party along a path which objectively means exactly that. The Economists thought that leadership in the political struggle was no concern of the Social-Democrats but properly the business of the liberals. The new *Iskra*-ists think that the active conduct of the democratic revolution is no concern of the Social-Democrats but properly the business of the democratic bourgeoisie, for, they argue, if the proletariat takes the leading and pre-eminent part it will "diminish the sweep" of the revolution.

In short, the new *Iskra*-ists are the epigones of Economism, not only in their origin at the Second Party Congress, but also in the manner in which they now present the tactical tasks of the proletariat in the democratic revolution. They, too, constitute an intellectual-opportunist wing of the

Party. In the sphere of organization they made their debut with the anarchist individualism of intellectuals and finished with "disorganization-as-a-process," fixing in the "Rules" adopted by the Conference the separation of the Party's publishing activities from the Party organization, an indirect and practically four-stage system of elections, a system of Bonapartist plebiscites instead of democratic representation, and finally the principle of "agreements" between the part and the whole. In Party tactics they continued to slide down the same inclined plane. In the "plan of the Zemstvo campaign" they declared that speeches to Zemstvo-ists were "the highest type of demonstration," finding only two active forces on the political scene (on the eve of January 9!)—the government and the democratic bourgeoisie. They made the pressing problem of arming "more profound" by substituting for the direct and practical slogan of an appeal to arms, the slogan: arm the people with a burning desire to arm themselves. The tasks connected with an armed insurrection, with the establishment of a provisional government and with a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship have now been distorted and blunted by them in their official resolutions. "Lest the bourgeoisie recoil"—this final chord of their last resolution throws a glaring light on the question of where their path is leading the Party.

The democratic revolution in Russia is a bourgeois revolution by reason of its social and economic content. But a mere repetition of this correct Marxian proposition is not enough. It must be properly understood and properly applied in political slogans. In general, all political liberties that are founded on present-day, i.e., capitalist, relations of production are bourgeois liberties. The demand for liberty expresses primarily the interests of the bourgeoisie. Its representatives were the first to raise this demand. Its supporters have everywhere used the liberty they acquired like masters, reducing it to moderate and meticulous bourgeois doses, combining it with the most subtle methods of suppressing

the revolutionary proletariat in peaceful times and with brutally cruel methods in stormy times.

But only the rebel Narodniks, the anarchists and the "Economists" could deduce from this that the struggle for liberty should be rejected or disparaged. These intellectual-philistine doctrines could be foisted on the proletariat only for a time and against its will. The proletariat always realized instinctively that it needed political liberty, needed it more than anyone else, despite the fact that its immediate effect would be to strengthen and to organize the bourgeoisie. The proletariat expects to find its salvation not by avoiding the class struggle but by developing it, by widening it, increasing its consciousness, its organization and determination. Whoever degrades the tasks of the political struggle transforms the Social-Democrat from a tribune of the people into a trade union secretary. Whoever degrades the proletarian tasks in a democratic bourgeois revolution transforms the Social-Democrat from a leader of the people's revolution into a leader of a free labour union.

Yes, the *people's* revolution. Social-Democracy has fought, and is quite rightly fighting against the bourgeois-democratic abuse of the word "people." It demands that this word shall not be used to cover up failure to understand the class antagonisms within the people. It insists categorically on the need for complete class independence for the party of the proletariat. But it divides the "people" into "classes," not in order that the advanced class may become shut up within itself, confine itself to narrow aims and emasculate its activity for fear that the economic rulers of the world will recoil, but in order that the advanced class, which does not suffer from the halfheartedness, vacillation and indecision of the intermediate classes, may with all the greater energy and enthusiasm fight for the cause of the whole of the people, at the head of the whole of the people.

That is what the present-day new *Iskra*-ists so often fail to understand and why they substitute for active politi-

cal slogans in the democratic revolution a mere pedantic repetition of the word "class," parsed in all genders and cases!

The democratic revolution is a bourgeois revolution. The slogan of a Black Redistribution, or "land and liberty"—this most widespread slogan of the peasant masses, down-trodden and ignorant, yet passionately yearning for light and happiness—is a bourgeois slogan. But we Marxists should know that there is not, nor can there be, any other path to real freedom for the proletariat and the peasantry, than the path of bourgeois freedom and bourgeois progress. We must not forget that there is not, nor can there be, at the present time, any other means of bringing Socialism nearer, than complete political liberty, than a democratic republic, than the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. As the representatives of the advanced and only revolutionary class, revolutionary without reservations, doubts or looking back, we must present to the whole of the people, as widely, as boldly and with the utmost initiative possible, the tasks of the democratic revolution. To degrade these tasks in theory means making a travesty of Marxism, distorting it in philistine fashion, while in practical politics it means delivering the cause of the revolution into the hands of the bourgeoisie, which will inevitably recoil from the task of consistently carrying out the revolution. The difficulties that lie on the road to the complete victory of the revolution are very great. No one will be able to blame the representatives of the proletariat if, having done everything in their power, their efforts are defeated by the resistance of the reaction, the treachery of the bourgeoisie and the ignorance of the masses. But everybody, and the class-conscious proletariat above all, will condemn Social-Democracy if it curtails the revolutionary energy of the democratic revolution and dampens revolutionary ardour because it is afraid to win, because it is actuated by the consideration: lest the bourgeoisie recoil.

Revolutions are the locomotives of history, said Marx. Revolutions are the festivals of the oppressed and the exploited. At no other time are the masses of the people in a position to come forward so actively as creators of a new social order as at a time of revolution. At such times the people are capable of performing miracles, if judged by the narrow, philistine scale of gradual progress. But the leaders of the revolutionary parties must also make their aims more comprehensive and bold at such a time, so that their slogans shall always be in advance of the revolutionary initiative of the masses, serve as a beacon, reveal to them our democratic and socialist ideal in all its magnitude and splendour and show them the shortest and most direct route to complete, absolute and decisive victory. Let us leave to the opportunists of the *Osvobozhdeniye* bourgeoisie the task of inventing roundabout, circuitous paths of compromise out of fear of the revolution and of the direct path. If we are compelled by force to drag ourselves along such paths, we shall be able to fulfil our duty in petty, everyday work also. But let ruthless struggle first decide the choice of the path. We shall be traitors to and betrayers of the revolution if we do not use this festive energy of the masses and their revolutionary ardour to wage a ruthless and self-sacrificing struggle for the direct and decisive path. Let the bourgeois opportunists contemplate the future reaction with craven fear. The workers will not be frightened either by the thought that the reaction promises to be terrible or by the thought that the bourgeoisie proposes to recoil. The workers are not looking forward to striking bargains, are not asking for sops; they are striving to crush the reactionary forces without mercy, i.e., to set up the *revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry*.

Of course, greater dangers threaten the ship of our Party in stormy times than in periods of the smooth "sailing" of liberal progress, which means the painfully slow sweating of the working class by its exploiters. Of course,



the tasks of the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship are a thousand times more difficult and more complicated than the tasks of an "extreme opposition" or of the exclusively parliamentary struggle. But whoever can deliberately prefer smooth sailing and the path of safe "opposition" in the present revolutionary situation had better abandon Social-Democratic work for a while, had better wait until the revolution is over, until the festive days have passed, when humdrum everyday life starts again and his narrow routine standards no longer strike such an abominably discordant note, or constitute such an ugly distortion of the tasks of the advanced class.

At the head of the whole of the people, and particularly of the peasantry—for complete freedom, for a consistent democratic revolution, for a republic! At the head of all the toilers and the exploited—for Socialism! Such must in practice be the policy of the revolutionary proletariat, such is the class slogan which must permeate and determine the solution of every tactical problem, of every practical step of the workers' party during the revolution.

## POSTSCRIPT

### ONCE AGAIN OSVOBOZHDENIYE-ISM, ONCE AGAIN NEW ISKRA-ISM

Numbers 71-72 of the *Osvobozhdeniye* and Nos. 102-103 of the *Iskra* provide a wealth of additional material on the question to which we have devoted Chapter 8 of our pamphlet. Since it is quite impossible to make use of the whole of this rich material here, we shall confine ourselves to the most important points only: firstly, to the kind of "realism" in Social-Democracy that *Osvobozhdeniye* praises and why the latter must praise it; secondly, to the relationship between the concepts revolution and dictatorship.

#### I. WHAT DO THE BOURGEOIS LIBERAL REALISTS PRAISE THE SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC "REALISTS" FOR?

The articles entitled "The Split in Russian Social-Democracy" and "The Triumph of Common Sense" (*Osvobozhdeniye*, No. 72) set forth the opinion on Social-Democracy held by the representatives of the liberal bourgeoisie, an opinion which is of remarkable value for class-conscious proletarians. We cannot too strongly recommend every Social-Democrat to read these articles in full and to *ponder over* every sentence in them. We shall reproduce first of all the most important propositions contained in both these articles.

"It is fairly difficult," writes the *Osvobozhdeniye*, "for an outside observer to grasp the real political meaning of the disagreements that

have split the Social-Democratic Party into two factions. A definition of the 'Majority' faction as the more radical and unswerving, as distinct from the 'Minority' which allows of certain compromises in the interests of the cause, would not be quite exact, and in any case would not provide an exhaustive characterization. At any rate the traditional dogmas of Marxian orthodoxy are observed by the Minority faction with even greater zeal perhaps than by the Lenin faction. The following characterization would appear to us to be more accurate. The fundamental political temper of the 'Majority' is abstract revolutionism, rebellion for the sake of rebellion, an eagerness to stir up insurrection among the popular masses by any and every means and to seize power immediately in their name; to a certain extent this brings the 'Leninists' close to the Socialist-Revolutionaries and overshadows in their minds the idea of the class struggle with the idea of a Russian revolution involving the whole people; while abjuring in practice much of the narrow-mindedness of the Social-Democratic doctrine, the 'Leninists' are, on the other hand, thoroughly imbued with the narrow-mindedness of revolutionism, renounce all practical work except the preparation of an immediate insurrection, ignore on principle all forms of legal and semilegal agitation and every species of practically-useful compromise with other oppositional trends. The Minority, on the contrary, while steadfastly adhering to the doctrine of Marxism, at the same time preserves the realistic elements of the Marxian world outlook. The fundamental idea of this faction is to oppose the interests of the 'proletariat' to the interests of the bourgeoisie. But, on the other hand, the struggle of the proletariat is conceived—of course within certain bounds dictated by the immutable dogmas of Social-Democracy—in realistically sober fashion, with a clear realization of all the concrete conditions and aims of this struggle. Neither of the two factions pursues its basic point of view quite consistently, for in their ideological and political activity they are bound by the strict formulae of the Social-Democratic catechism, which keep the 'Leninists' from becoming unswerving rebels, after the fashion of some, at least, of the Socialist-Revolutionaries, and the 'Iskra-ists' from becoming the practical leaders of the real political movement of the working class."

And, after quoting the contents of the most important resolutions, the *Osvobozhdeniye* writer goes on to illustrate his general "thoughts," with several concrete remarks about them. In comparison with the Third Congress, he says, "the Minority Conference takes a totally different attitude towards armed insurrection." "In connection with the attitude towards armed insurrection," there is a difference in the respective resolutions on a provisional government. "A similar difference is revealed in relation to the workers' trade unions. The 'Leninists' do

not say a single word in their resolution about this most important starting point in the political education and organization of the working class. The Minority, on the other hand, drew up a very weighty resolution." With regard to the liberals, both factions, he says, are unanimous, but the Third Congress "repeats almost word for word Plekhanov's resolution on the attitude towards the liberals adopted at the Second Congress and rejects Starover's resolution adopted by the same Congress, which was more favourably inclined towards the liberals." Although the Congress and the Conference resolutions on the peasant movement coincide on the whole, "the 'Majority' lays more emphasis on the idea of the revolutionary confiscation of the landlords' estates and other land, while the 'Minority' wants to make the demand for democratic state and administrative reforms the basis of its agitation."

Finally, the *Osvobozhdeniye* cites from the *Iskra*, No. 100, a Menshevik resolution, the main clause of which reads as follows: "In view of the fact that at the present time underground work alone does not secure adequate participation of the masses in Party life and in some degree leads to the masses as such being contrasted to the Party as an illegal organization, the latter must assume leadership of the trade union struggle of the workers on a legal basis, strictly linking up this struggle with the Social-Democratic tasks." Commenting on this resolution the *Osvobozhdeniye* exclaims: "We heartily welcome this resolution as a triumph of common sense, as evidence that a definite section of the Social-Democratic Party is beginning to see the light with regard to tactics."

The reader now has before him all the essential opinions of the *Osvobozhdeniye*. It would, of course, be the greatest mistake to regard these opinions as correct in the sense that they correspond to objective truth. Every Social-Democrat will easily detect mistakes in them at every step. It would be naive to forget that these opinions are thoroughly permeated with the interests and the points of view of the liberal bourgeoisie, and that accordingly they are utterly biassed and tendentious. They reflect the views of the Social-Democrats in the same way as objects are reflected in a concave or convex mirror. But it would be an even greater mistake to forget that in the final analysis these bourgeois-distorted opinions reflect the real interests of the bourgeoisie, which, as a class, undoubtedly understands correctly which trends in Social-Democracy are advantageous, close,

akin and agreeable, and which trends are harmful, distant, alien and antipathetic to it. A bourgeois philosopher or a bourgeois publicist can never understand Social-Democracy properly, neither Menshevik nor Bolshevik Social-Democracy. But if he is at all a sensible publicist, his class instinct will not deceive him, and he will always grasp the significance for the bourgeoisie of one or another trend in the Social-Democratic movement, on the whole correctly, although he may present it in a distorted way. That is why the class instinct of our enemy, his class opinion, is always deserving of the most serious attention of every class-conscious proletarian.

What, then, does the class instinct of the Russian bourgeoisie, as expressed by the *Osvobozhdenitsi*, tell us?

It quite definitely expresses its satisfaction with the trend represented by the new *Iskra*, praises it for its realism, sober-mindedness, the triumph of common sense, the seriousness of its resolutions, its beginning to see the light on questions of tactics, its practicalness, etc.—and it expresses dissatisfaction with the trend of the Third Congress, censures it for its narrow-mindedness, revolutionism, its rebel spirit, its repudiation of practically useful compromises, etc. The class instinct of the bourgeoisie suggests to it exactly what has been repeatedly proved with the help of most precise facts in our literature, namely, that the new *Iskra*-ists are the opportunist and their opponents the revolutionary wing of the present-day Russian Social-Democratic movement. The liberals cannot but sympathize with the trend of the former, and cannot but censure the trend of the latter. The liberals, being the ideologists of the bourgeoisie, perfectly well understand the advantages to the bourgeoisie of “practicalness, sober-mindedness and seriousness” on the part of the working class, i.e., of actually restricting its field of activity within the boundaries of capitalism, reforms, the trade union struggle, etc. Dangerous and terrible to the bourgeoisie is the “revolutionary narrow-mindedness” of the

proletariat and its endeavour in order to promote its own class aims to win the leadership in a popular Russian revolution.

That this is the real meaning of the word "realism" as employed by the *Osvobozhdeniye* is evident among other things from the way it was used previously by the *Osvobozhdeniye* and Mr. Struve. The *Iskra* itself could not but admit that *this* was the meaning of the *Osvobozhdeniye*'s "realism." Take, for instance, the article entitled "It Is High Time!" in the supplement to the *Iskra*, No. 73-74. The author of this article (a consistent exponent of the views of the "Marsh" at the Second Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party) frankly expressed the opinion that "at the Congress Akimov played the part of the ghost of opportunism rather than of its real representative." And the editors of the *Iskra* were forthwith obliged to correct the author of the article "It Is High Time!" by stating in a note:

"We cannot agree with this opinion. Comrade Akimov's views on the program bear the clear imprint of opportunism, which fact is admitted even by the *Osvobozhdeniye* critic, who—in one of its recent issues—stated that Comrade Akimov is an adherent of the 'realist'—read: revisionist—tendency."

Thus the *Iskra* itself is perfectly aware that the *Osvobozhdeniye*'s "realism" is simply opportunism and nothing else. If in attacking "liberal realism" (*Iskra*, No. 102) the *Iskra* now says nothing about how *it was praised by the liberals* for its realism, the explanation of this circumstance is that such praise is harder to swallow than any censure. Such praise (which the *Osvobozhdeniye* uttered not by mere chance and not for the first time) actually proves the affinity between liberal realism and those tendencies of Social-Democratic "realism" (read: opportunism) that run through every resolution of the new *Iskra*-ists as a result of the mistaken character of their whole tactical line.

Indeed, the Russian bourgeoisie has already fully revealed

its inconsistency and egoism in the "popular" revolution—has revealed it in Mr. Struve's arguments, by the whole tone and content of the numerous liberal newspapers, and by the nature of the political utterances of the bulk of the Zemstvo-ists, the bulk of the intellectuals and in general of all the adherents of Messrs. Trubetskoy, Petrunkevich, Rodichev and Co. Of course, the bourgeoisie does not always clearly understand, but in general and on the whole, its class instinct enables it to grasp perfectly well that, on the one hand, the proletariat and the "people" are useful for *its* revolution as cannon fodder, as a battering-ram against the autocracy, but that, on the other hand, the proletariat and the revolutionary peasantry will be terribly dangerous to it if they win a "decisive victory over tsarism" and carry the democratic revolution to completion. That is why the bourgeoisie strains every effort to induce the proletariat to be content with a "modest" role in the revolution, to be more sober-minded, practical and realistic, to be guided in its activities by the principle, "lest the bourgeoisie recoil."

The bourgeois intellectuals know full well that they will not be able to get rid of the working-class movement. That is why they do not come out against the working-class movement, they do not come out against the class struggle of the proletariat—no, they even pay lip service to the right to strike, to a genteel class struggle, understanding the working-class movement and the class struggle in the Brentano or Hirsch-Duncker sense. In other words they are fully prepared to "yield" to the workers the right to strike and to organize in trade unions (which in fact has already been almost won by the workers themselves), provided the workers renounce their "rebelliousness," their "narrow-minded revolutionism," their hostility to "practically-useful compromises," their claims and aspirations to put on the "popular Russian revolution," the imprint of *their* class struggle, the imprint of proletarian consistency, proletarian determination and "plebeian Jacobinism." That is why the

bourgeois intellectuals all over Russia exert every effort, resort to thousands of ways and means—books,\* lectures, speeches, talks, etc., etc.—to imbue the workers with the ideas of (bourgeois) sober-mindedness, (liberal) practicalness, (opportunist) realism, (Brentano) class struggle, (Hirsch-Duncker) trade unions,<sup>13</sup> etc. The latter two slogans are particularly convenient for the bourgeois of the “constitutional-democratic” party, or the party of “liberation,” since outwardly they coincide with the Marxian slogans, since with a few small omissions and some slight distortions they can easily be confused with and sometimes even passed off as Social-Democratic slogans. For instance, the legal liberal newspaper *Rassvyet* (which we will try some day to discuss in greater detail with the readers of the *Proletary*) frequently says such “bold” things about the class struggle, about the possible deception of the proletariat by the bourgeoisie, about the working-class movement, about the initiative of the proletariat, etc., etc., that the inattentive reader or an unenlightened worker might easily be led to believe that its “social-democratism” is genuine. Actually, however, it is a bourgeois imitation of social-democratism, an opportunist distortion and perversion of the concept class struggle.

At the bottom of the whole of this gigantic (in breadth of influence on the masses) bourgeois subterfuge lies the tendency to reduce the working-class movement mainly to a trade union movement, to keep it as far away as possible from an independent (i.e., revolutionary and directed towards a democratic dictatorship) policy, to “overshadow in the minds of the workers the idea of a Russian revolution involving the whole people with the idea of the class struggle.”

As the reader will perceive, we have turned the *Osvobozhdeniye* formulation upside down. This is an excellent formulation that excellently expresses the two views of the

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\* Cf. Prokopovich, *The Labour Question in Russia*.



role of the proletariat in a democratic revolution: the bourgeois view and the Social-Democratic view. The bourgeoisie wants to confine the proletariat to the trade union movement and thereby to "overshadow in its mind the idea of a Russian revolution involving the whole people with the idea of the (*Brentano*) class struggle"—which is wholly in the spirit of the Bernsteinian authors of the *Credo*, who overshadowed in the minds of the workers the idea of political struggle with the idea of a "purely working-class" movement. Social-Democracy, however, wants, on the contrary, to develop the class struggle of the proletariat to the point where the latter will take the leading part in the popular Russian revolution, i.e., will lead this revolution to the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry.

The revolution in our country is one that involves the whole people, says the bourgeoisie to the proletariat. Therefore, you, as a separate class, must confine yourselves to your class struggle, must in the name of "common sense" devote your attention mainly to the trade unions, and their legalization, must consider these trade unions as "the most important starting point in your political education and organization," must in a revolutionary situation draw up for the most part "serious" resolutions like the new *Iskra* resolution, must pay careful heed to resolutions that are "more favourably inclined towards the liberals," must show preference for leaders who display a tendency to become "practical leaders of the real political movement of the working class," must "preserve the realistic elements of the Marxian world outlook" (if you have unfortunately already become infected with the "strict formulæ" of this "unscientific" catechism).

The revolution in our country is one involving the whole people, Social-Democracy says to the proletariat. Therefore, you, as the most progressive and the only thoroughly revolutionary class, must strive not only to take the most

active part, but also the leading part in it. Therefore, you must not confine yourselves to narrowly conceived limits of the class struggle, meaning mainly the trade union movement, but, on the contrary, you must strive to widen the limits and the content of your class struggle to *include* not only *all* the aims of the present, democratic, Russian revolution of the whole of the people, but the aims of the subsequent socialist revolution as well. Therefore, while not ignoring the trade union movement, while not refusing to take advantage of even the slightest legal possibilities, you must, in a revolutionary period, put in the forefront the tasks of armed insurrection and the formation of a revolutionary army and a revolutionary government as being the only way to the complete victory of the people over tsarism, to the winning of a democratic republic and real political liberty.

It would be superfluous to speak about the halfhearted and inconsistent stand, which, naturally, is so pleasing to the bourgeoisie, that the new *Iskra*-ist resolutions took on this question because of their mistaken "line."

## II. COMRADE MARTYNOV AGAIN RENDERS THE QUESTION "MORE PROFOUND"

Let us pass on to Martynov's articles in Nos. 102 and 103 of the *Iskra*. We shall, of course, make no reply to Martynov's attempts to prove the incorrectness of our and the correctness of his interpretation of a number of citations from Engels and Marx. These attempts are so trivial, Martynov's subterfuges so obvious and the question so clear that it would be of no interest to dwell on this point again. Every thinking reader will be able easily to see through the simple wiles employed by Martynov in his retreat all along the line, particularly when the complete translations of Engels' pamphlet *The Bakunists at Work* and Marx's *Address of the Central Council to the Communist League of*

March 1850, on which a group of collaborators of the *Proletary* are now working, are published. A single quotation from Martynov's article will suffice to make his retreat clear to the reader.

"The *Iskra* 'admits,' " says Martynov in No. 103, "that the establishment of a provisional government is one of the possible and expedient ways of furthering the revolution. and denies the expediency of the participation of Social-Democrats in a *bourgeois* provisional government, precisely in the interests of a complete seizure, in the future, of the state machine for a Social-Democratic revolution." In other words, the *Iskra* now admits the absurdity of all its fears concerning the responsibility of a revolutionary government for the exchequer and the banks, concerning the danger and impossibility of taking over the "prisons," etc. But the *Iskra* is only muddling things as of old, confusing the democratic with the socialist dictatorship. This muddle is unavoidable, it is a means to cover up the retreat.

But among the muddleheads of the new *Iskra* Martynov stands out as a muddlehead of the first order, as a muddlehead of talent, if we may so express it. Confusing the question by his laborious efforts to render it "more profound," he almost invariably "arrives at" new formulations which show up splendidly the entire falsity of the stand he has taken. You will remember how in the days of Economism he rendered Plekhanov "more profound" and created the formulation: "economic struggle against the employers and the government." It would be difficult to find in all the literature of the Economists a more apt expression of the entire falsity of this trend. It is the same today. Martynov zealously serves the new *Iskra* and almost every time he opens his mouth he furnishes us with new and excellent material for an evaluation of the new *Iskra's* false position. In No. 102 he says that Lenin "has imperceptibly substituted the concept dictatorship for that of revolution" (p. 3, col. 2).

As a matter of fact all the accusations levelled at us by

the new *Iskra*-ists can be reduced to this one. And how grateful we are to Martynov for this accusation! What an invaluable service he renders us in the struggle against the new *Iskra* ideas by formulating his accusation in this way! We must positively beg the editors of the *Iskra* to let Martynov loose against us more often for the purpose of rendering the attacks on the *Proletary* "more profound" and for a "truly principled" formulation of these attacks. For the more Martynov strains to argue on the plane of principles the worse his arguments appear, and the more clearly he reveals the gaps in the new *Iskra* ideas, the more successfully he performs on himself and on his friends the useful pedagogical operation: *reductio ad absurdum* (reducing the principles of the new *Iskra* to absurdity).

The *Vperyod* and the *Proletary* "substitute" the term dictatorship for that of revolution. The *Iskra* does not want such a "substitution." Just so, most esteemed Comrade Martynov! You have unwittingly stated a great truth. With this *new* formulation you have confirmed our contention that the *Iskra* is dragging at the tail of the revolution, is straying into an *Osvobozhdeniye* formulation of its tasks, whereas the *Vperyod* and the *Proletary* are issuing slogans that lead the democratic revolution forward.

You don't understand this, Comrade Martynov? In view of the importance of the question we shall try to give you a detailed explanation.

The bourgeois character of the democratic revolution expresses itself, among other things, in the fact that a number of classes, groups and sections of society which take their stand entirely on the recognition of private property and commodity production and are incapable of going beyond these bounds, are led by force of circumstances to recognize the uselessness of the autocracy and of the whole feudal order in general, and join in the demand for liberty. The bourgeois character of *this* liberty, which is demanded by "society" and advocated in a flood of words (and words

only!) by the landowners and the capitalists, is manifesting itself more and more clearly. At the same time the radical difference between the struggle of the workers and the struggle of the bourgeoisie for liberty, between proletarian and liberal democratism, also becomes more obvious. The working class and its class-conscious representatives are marching forward and pushing this struggle forward, not only without fearing to carry it to completion, but striving to go far beyond the uttermost limits of the democratic revolution. The bourgeoisie is inconsistent and self-seeking, and accepts the slogans of liberty only in part and hypocritically. All attempts to draw a particular line or to draw up particular "points" (like the points in Starover's or the Conferencers' resolution) beyond which begins this hypocrisy of the bourgeois friends of liberty, or, if you like, this betrayal of liberty by its bourgeois friends, are inevitably doomed to failure; for the bourgeoisie, caught between two fires (the autocracy and the proletariat), is capable of changing its position and slogans by a thousand ways and means, of adapting itself by moving an inch to the Left or an inch to the Right, constantly bargaining and dickering. The task of proletarian democratism is not to invent such lifeless "points," but unceasingly to criticize the developing political situation, to expose the ever new and unforeseeable inconsistencies and betrayals on the part of the bourgeoisie.

Recall the history of Mr. Struve's political pronouncements in the illegal press, the history of Social-Democracy's war with him, and you will see clearly how these tasks were carried out by Social-Democracy, the champion of proletarian democratism. Mr. Struve began with a purely Shipov slogan: "Rights and an Authoritative Zemstvo" (see my article in the *Zarya*, "The Persecutors of the Zemstvo and the Hannibals of Liberalism"\*).

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\* See Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. V, pp. 19-65.—Ed.

exposed him and pushed him in the direction of a definitely constitutionalist program. When this "pushing" took effect, thanks to the particularly rapid progress of revolutionary events, the struggle shifted to the *next* question of democracy: not only a constitution in general, but one providing for universal and equal suffrage, direct elections and secret ballot. When we "captured" this new position from the "enemy" (the adoption of universal suffrage by the Osvobozhdeniye League) we began to press further; we showed up the hypocrisy and falsity of a two-chamber system, and the fact that universal suffrage had not been fully recognized by the *Osvobozhdentsi*; we pointed to their *monarchism* and showed up the huckstering nature of their democratism, or, in other words, their *trading* in the interests of the great Russian revolution by these *Osvobozhdeniye* heroes of the moneybags.

Finally, the savage obstinacy of the autocracy, the enormous progress of the civil war and the hopelessness of the position into which the monarchists have led Russia have begun to penetrate even the thickest skulls. The revolution has become a *fact*. It is no longer necessary to be a revolutionary to acknowledge the revolution. The autocratic government has actually been and is disintegrating in the sight of all. As has justly been remarked in the legal press by a certain liberal (Mr. Gredeskul), actual insubordination to this government has set in. Despite all its apparent strength the autocracy has proved impotent; the events attending the developing revolution have simply begun to brush aside this parasitic organism which is rotting alive. Compelled to base their activity (or, to put it more correctly, their political wirepulling) on relationships as they are actually taking shape, the liberal bourgeois *have begun to see the necessity of recognizing the revolution*. They do so not because they are revolutionaries, but despite the fact that they are not revolutionaries. They do so of necessity and against their will, angrily glaring at the suc-

cesses of the revolution, they blame the autocracy for the revolution because it does not want to strike a bargain, but wants a life-and-death struggle. Born hucksters, they hate struggle and revolution, but circumstances force them to tread the ground of revolution, for there is no other ground under their feet.

We are witnessing a highly instructive and highly comical spectacle. The bourgeois liberal prostitutes are trying to drape themselves in the toga of revolution. The *Osvobozhdentsi*—*risum teneatis, amici!*\*—the *Osvobozhdentsi* are beginning to speak in the name of the revolution! The *Osvobozhdentsi* are beginning to assure us that they “do not fear revolution” (Mr. Struve in the *Osvobozhdeniye*, No. 72)!!! The *Osvobozhdentsi* are voicing their claims “to be at the head of the revolution”!!!

This is an exceptionally significant phenomenon that characterizes not only the progress of bourgeois liberalism, but even more so the progress of the real successes of the revolutionary movement, which has *compelled* recognition. Even the bourgeoisie is beginning to feel that it is more to its advantage to take its stand on the side of the revolution—so shaky is the autocracy. On the other hand, this phenomenon, which testifies to the fact that the entire movement has risen to a new and higher plane, also sets us new and higher tasks. The recognition of the revolution by the bourgeoisie cannot be sincere, irrespective of the personal integrity of this or that bourgeois ideologist. The bourgeoisie cannot help introducing selfishness and inconsistency, the bargaining spirit and petty reactionary tricks even into this higher stage of the movement. We must now formulate the immediate *concrete* tasks of the revolution *differently*, in the name of our program and in amplification of our program. What was adequate yesterday is *inadequate today*. Yesterday, perhaps, the demand for the recog-

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\* Restrain your laughter, friends!

nition of the revolution was adequate as an advanced democratic slogan. Today this is not enough. The revolution has forced even Mr. Struve to recognize it. The advanced class must now define exactly *the very content* of the urgent and pressing tasks of this revolution. While recognizing the revolution, Messrs. the Struves again and again expose their asses' ears and strike up the old song about the possibility of a peaceful outcome, about *Nicholas*<sup>14</sup> calling on the *Osvobozhdentsi* to take power, etc., etc. The *Osvobozhdentsi* recognize the revolution in order the more safely for themselves to conjure it away, to betray it. It is our duty at the present time to show the proletariat and the whole people the inadequacy of the slogan: "Revolution"; we must show how necessary it is to have a clear and unambiguous, consistent and determined definition of *the very content* of the revolution. And this definition is provided by the one slogan that is capable of correctly expressing a "decisive victory" of the revolution, the slogan: for the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry.

The misuse of terms is a most common practice in politics. The term "Socialist," for example, has often been appropriated by the supporters of English bourgeois liberalism ("We are all Socialists now," said Harcourt), by the supporters of Bismarck, and by the friends of Pope Leo XIII. The term "revolution" also fully lends itself to misuse and at a certain stage in the development of the movement such misuse is inevitable. When Mr. Struve began to speak in the name of revolution I involuntarily remembered Thiers. A few days before the February revolution, this monstrous gnome, this most consummate expression of the political corruption of the bourgeoisie, scented the approach of a popular storm, and so he announced from the parliamentary tribune: that he was *of the party of revolution!* (See Marx's *The Civil War in France*.) The political significance of *Osvobozhdeniye's* turn to the party of revolution is quite



*identical* with that of Thiers. The fact that the Russian Thiers are talking about their belonging to the party of revolution shows that the slogan revolution has become inadequate, meaningless and defines no tasks: for the revolution has become a fact, and the most diverse elements are flocking to its side.

Indeed, what is revolution from the Marxist point of view? The violent break-up of the obsolete political superstructure, the contradiction between which and the new relations of production caused its collapse at a certain moment. The contradiction between the autocracy and the entire structure of capitalist Russia, all the requirements of her bourgeois-democratic development, has now caused its collapse, all the more severe owing to the lengthy period in which this contradiction was artificially sustained. The superstructure is cracking at every joint, it is yielding to pressure, it is growing weaker. The people, through the representatives of the most diverse classes and groups, must now, by its own efforts, build a new superstructure for itself. At a certain stage of development the uselessness of the old superstructure becomes obvious to all. The revolution is recognized by all. The task now is to define *which* classes must build the new superstructure, and *how* they are to build it. If this is not defined, the slogan revolution is empty and meaningless at the present time; for the feebleness of the autocracy makes "revolutionaries" even of the Grand Dukes and of the *Moskovskiye Vyedomosti*! If this is not defined there can be no talk about the advanced democratic tasks of the advanced class. This definition is given in the slogan: the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. This slogan defines the classes upon which the new "builders" of the new superstructure can and must rely, the character of the new superstructure (a "democratic" as distinct from a socialist dictatorship), and how it is to be built (dictatorship, i.e., the violent suppression of violent resistance, arming the revo-

lutionary classes of the people). Whoever now refuses to recognize this slogan of revolutionary democratic dictatorship, the slogan of a revolutionary army, of a revolutionary government, of revolutionary peasant committees, either hopelessly fails to understand the tasks of the revolution, is unable to define the new and higher tasks that are called forth by the present situation, or is deceiving the people, betraying the revolution, misusing the slogan "revolution."

The former case applies to Comrade Martynov and his friends. The latter applies to Mr. Struve and the whole of the "constitutional-democratic" Zemstvo party.

Comrade Martynov was so shrewd and smart that he hurled the charge of "substituting" the term dictatorship for that of revolution just at the time when the development of the revolution called for a definition of its tasks by the slogan dictatorship! Actually, Comrade Martynov again had the misfortune to remain at the tail end, to get stranded at the penultimate stage, to *find himself on the level of Osvobozhdeniye-ism*, for it is precisely to the political stand of *Osvobozhdeniye*, i.e., to the interests of the liberal monarchist bourgeoisie, that recognition of "revolution" (in words) and refusal to recognize the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry (i.e., revolution in deeds) now corresponds. The liberal bourgeoisie, through the mouth of Mr. Struve, is now expressing itself in favour of revolution. The class-conscious proletariat, through the mouths of the revolutionary Social-Democrats, is demanding the dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. And here the wiseacre of the new *Iskra* intervenes in the controversy and yells: don't dare "substitute" the term dictatorship for that of revolution! Well, is it not true that the false stand taken by the new *Iskra*-ists dooms them to be constantly dragging along at the tail of *Osvobozhdeniye-ism*?

We have shown that the *Osvobozhdentsi* are ascending (not without encouraging prods by the Social-Democrats)

step by step in the matter of recognizing democracy. At first the issue in the dispute between us was: the Shipov system (rights and an authoritative Zemstvo) or constitutionalism? Then it was: limited suffrage or universal suffrage? Later: recognition of the revolution or a stockjobber's bargain with the autocracy? Finally, now it is: recognition of the revolution without the dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry or recognition of the demand for a dictatorship of these classes in the democratic revolution? It is possible and probable that Messrs. the *Osvobozhdentsi* (whether the present ones or their successors in the Left wing of the bourgeois democrats makes no difference) will ascend another step, i.e., recognize in time (perhaps by the time Comrade Martynov goes up one more step) the slogan of dictatorship also. This will inevitably be so if the Russian revolution continues to forge ahead successfully and achieves a decisive victory. What will be the position of Social-Democracy then? The complete victory of the present revolution will mark the end of the democratic revolution and the beginning of a determined struggle for a socialist revolution. The satisfaction of the demands of the present-day peasantry, the utter rout of reaction, and the winning of a democratic republic will mark the complete end of the revolutionism of the bourgeoisie and even of the petty bourgeoisie—will mark the beginning of the real struggle of the proletariat for Socialism. The more complete the democratic revolution, the sooner, the more widespread, the purer and the more determined will be the development of this new struggle. The slogan of a "democratic" dictatorship expresses the historically limited nature of the present revolution and the necessity of a new struggle on the basis of the new order for the complete emancipation of the working class from all oppression and all exploitation. In other words: when the democratic bourgeoisie or petty bourgeoisie ascends another step, when not only the revolution but the complete victory of the revolution becomes an accom-

plished fact, we shall "substitute" (perhaps amid the horrified cries of new, future, Martynovs) for the slogan of the democratic dictatorship, the slogan of a socialist dictatorship of the proletariat, i.e., of a complete socialist revolution.

### III. THE VULGAR BOURGEOIS REPRESENTATION OF DICTATORSHIP AND MARX'S VIEW OF IT

Mehring tells us in his notes to Marx's articles from the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* of 1848 that he published, that one of the reproaches levelled at this newspaper by bourgeois publications was that it had allegedly demanded "the immediate introduction of a dictatorship as the sole means of achieving democracy" (Marx, *Nachlass*, Vol. III, p. 53). From the vulgar bourgeois standpoint the terms dictatorship and democracy are mutually exclusive. Failing to understand the theory of class struggle, and accustomed to seeing in the political arena the petty squabbling of the various bourgeois circles and coteries, the bourgeois conceives dictatorship to mean the annulment of all the liberties and guarantees of democracy, tyranny of every kind, and every sort of abuse of power in the personal interests of a dictator. In essence, it is precisely this vulgar bourgeois view that is manifested in the writings of our Martynov, who winds up his "new campaign" in the new *Iskra* by attributing the partiality of the *Vperyod* and the *Proletary* for the slogan of dictatorship to Lenin's "passionate desire to try his luck" (*Iskra*, No. 103, p. 3, col. 2). In order to explain to Martynov the meaning of the term class dictatorship as distinct from personal dictatorship, and the tasks of a democratic dictatorship as distinct from those of a socialist dictatorship, it would not be amiss to dwell on the views of the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*.

"Every provisional organization of the state after a revolution," wrote the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* on Septem-

ber 14, 1848, "requires a dictatorship, and an energetic dictatorship at that. From the very beginning we have reproached Camphausen" (the head of the Ministry after March 18, 1848) "for not acting dictatorially, for not having immediately smashed up and eliminated the remnants of the old institutions. And while Herr Camphausen was lulling himself with constitutional illusions, the defeated party (i.e., the party of reaction) strengthened its positions in the bureaucracy, and in the army, and here and there even began to venture upon open struggle."

These words, Mehring justly remarks, sum up in a few propositions all that was propounded in detail in the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* in long articles on the Camphausen Ministry. What do these words of Marx tell us? That a provisional revolutionary government *must* act dictatorially (a proposition which the *Iskra* was totally unable to grasp since it was fighting shy of the slogan: dictatorship) and that the task of such a dictatorship is to destroy the remnants of the old institutions (which is precisely what was clearly stated in the resolution of the Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party about the struggle against counterrevolution, and what was omitted in the resolution of the Conference, as we showed above). Thirdly, and lastly, it follows from these words that Marx castigated the bourgeois democrats for entertaining "constitutional illusions" in a period of revolution and open civil war. The meaning of these words becomes particularly obvious from the article in the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* of June 6, 1848. "A Constituent National Assembly," wrote Marx, "must first of all be an active, revolutionary-active assembly. The Frankfurt Assembly, however, is busying itself with school exercises in parliamentarism while allowing the government to act. Let us assume that this learned assembly succeeds after mature consideration in working out the best possible agenda and the best possible constitution. But what is the use of the best possible agenda and of the

best possible constitution, if the German governments have in the meantime placed the bayonet on the agenda?"

That is the meaning of the slogan: dictatorship. We can judge from this what Marx's attitude would have been towards resolutions which call a "decision to organize a constituent assembly" a decisive victory, or which invite us to "remain the party of extreme revolutionary opposition"!

Major questions in the life of nations are settled only by force. The reactionary classes themselves are usually the first to resort to violence, to civil war; they are the first to "place the bayonet on the agenda," as the Russian autocracy has been doing systematically and undeviatingly everywhere ever since January 9. And since such a situation has arisen, since the bayonet has really become the main point on the political agenda, since insurrection has proved to be imperative and urgent—constitutional illusions and school exercises in parliamentarism become only a screen for the bourgeois betrayal of the revolution, a screen to conceal the fact that the bourgeoisie is "recoiling" from the revolution. It is therefore the slogan of dictatorship that the genuinely revolutionary class must advance.

On the question of the tasks of this dictatorship Marx wrote, already in the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*: "The National Assembly should have acted dictatorially against the reactionary attempts of the obsolete governments; the force of public opinion in its favour would then have been so strong as to shatter all bayonets.... But this Assembly bores the German people instead of carrying the people with it or being carried away by it." In Marx's opinion, the National Assembly should have "eliminated from the regime actually existing in Germany everything that contradicted the principle of the sovereignty of the people," then it should have "consolidated the revolutionary ground on which it stands in order to make the sovereignty of the people, won by the revolution, secure against all attacks."

Thus, the tasks which Marx set before a revolutionary government or dictatorship in 1848, amounted in substance primarily to a *democratic* revolution: defence against counterrevolution and the actual elimination of everything that contradicted the sovereignty of the people. This is nothing else than a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship.

To proceed: which classes, in Marx's opinion, could and should have achieved this task (actually to exercise to the full the principle of the sovereignty of the people and to beat off the attacks of the counterrevolution)? Marx speaks of the "people." But we know that he always ruthlessly combated the petty-bourgeois illusions about the unity of the "people" and about the absence of a class struggle within the people. In using the word "people," Marx did not thereby gloss over class distinctions, but combined definite elements that were capable of carrying the revolution to completion.

After the victory of the Berlin proletariat on March 18, wrote the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, the results of the revolution proved to be twofold: "On the one hand the arming of the people, the right of association, the sovereignty of the people actually attained; on the other hand, the preservation of the monarchy and the Camphausen-Hanseemann Ministry, i.e., the government of representatives of the big bourgeoisie. Thus, the revolution had two series of results, which had inevitably to diverge. The people had achieved victory; it had won liberties of a decisive democratic nature, but the direct power passed not into its hands, but into those of the big bourgeoisie. In a word, the revolution was not completed. The people allowed the formation of a ministry of big bourgeois, and the big bourgeois immediately displayed their strivings by offering an alliance to the old Prussian nobility and bureaucracy. Arnim, Canitz and Schwerin joined the Ministry.

*"The upper bourgeoisie, ever antirevolutionary, concluded a defensive and offensive alliance with the reaction out*

*of fear of the people, that is to say, the workers and the democratic bourgeoisie.*" (Our italics.)

Thus, not only a "decision to organize a constituent assembly," but even its actual convocation is insufficient for a decisive victory of the revolution! Even after a partial victory in an armed struggle (the victory of the Berlin workers over the troops on March 18, 1848) an "incomplete" revolution, a revolution "that has not been carried to completion," is possible. On what, then, does its completion depend? It depends on whose hands the immediate rule passes into, whether into the hands of the Petrunkeviches and Rodichevs, that is to say, the Camphausens and the Hansemanns, or into the hands of the *people*, i.e., the workers and the democratic bourgeoisie. In the first case the bourgeoisie will possess power, and the proletariat "freedom of criticism," freedom to "remain the party of extreme revolutionary opposition." Immediately after the victory, the bourgeoisie will conclude an alliance with the reaction (this would inevitably happen in Russia too, if, for example, the St. Petersburg workers gained only a partial victory in street fighting with the troops and left it to Messrs. Petrunkeviches and Co. to form a government). In the second case, a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship, i.e., the complete victory of the revolution, would be possible.

It now remains to define more precisely what Marx really meant by "democratic bourgeoisie" (demokratische Bürgerschaft), which together with the workers he called the people, in contradistinction to the big bourgeoisie.

A clear answer to this question is supplied by the following passage from an article in the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* of July 29, 1848: "... The German revolution of 1848 is only a parody of the French revolution of 1789.

"On August 4, 1789, three weeks after the storming of the Bastille, the French people in a single day prevailed over all the feudal burdens.

"On July 11, 1848, four months after the March barri-



cares, the feudal burdens prevailed over the German people. *Teste Gierke cum Hansemanno*.\*

"The French bourgeoisie of 1789 did not for a moment leave its allies, the peasants, in the lurch. It knew that the foundation of its rule was the destruction of feudalism in the countryside, the creation of a free landowning (*grundbesitzenden*) peasant class.

"The German bourgeoisie of 1848 is without the least compunction betraying the peasants, who are its most natural allies, the flesh of its flesh, and without whom it is powerless against the nobility.

"The continuance of feudal rights, their sanction under the guise of (illusory) redemption—such is the result of the German revolution of 1848. The mountain brought forth a mouse."

This is a very instructive passage: it gives us four important propositions: 1) The incompleted German revolution differs from the completed French revolution in that the German bourgeoisie betrayed not only democracy in general, but also the peasantry in particular. 2) The foundation for the full consummation of a democratic revolution is the creation of a free class of peasants. 3) The creation of such a class means the abolition of feudal burdens, the destruction of feudalism, but does not yet mean a socialist revolution. 4) The peasants are the "most natural" allies of the bourgeoisie, that is to say, of the democratic bourgeoisie, which without them is "powerless" against the reaction.

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\* "Witnesses: Herr Gierke and Herr Hansemann." Hansemann was a minister who represented the party of the big bourgeoisie (Russian counterpart: Trubetskoy or Rodichev, and the like); Gierke was Minister of Agriculture in the Hansemann Cabinet, who drew up a plan, a "bold" plan for "abolishing feudal burdens," professedly "without compensation," but in fact for abolishing only the minor and unimportant burdens while preserving or granting compensation for the more essential ones. Herr Gierke was something like the Russian Messrs. Kablukov, Manuilov, Hertzenstein, and similar bourgeois liberal friends of the muzhik who desire the "extension of peasant landownership" but do not wish to offend the landlords.

Making proper allowances for concrete national peculiarities and substituting serfdom for feudalism, all these propositions can be fully applied to Russia in 1905. There is no doubt that by learning from the experience of Germany, as elucidated by Marx, we cannot arrive at any other slogan for a decisive victory of the revolution than: a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. There is no doubt that the chief components of the "people," whom Marx in 1848 contrasted with the resisting reactionaries and the treacherous bourgeoisie, are the proletariat and the peasantry. There is no doubt that in Russia too the liberal bourgeoisie and the gentlemen of the Osvobozhdeniye League are betraying and will continue to betray the peasantry, i.e., will confine themselves to a pseudo reform and taking the side of the landlords in the decisive battle between them and the peasantry. Only the proletariat is capable of supporting the peasantry to the end in this struggle. There is no doubt, finally, that in Russia also the success of the peasant struggle, i.e., the transfer of the whole of the land to the peasantry, will signify a complete democratic revolution and constitute the social support of the revolution carried to its completion, but it will by no means be a socialist revolution, or "socialization" that the ideologists of the petty bourgeoisie, the Socialist-Revolutionaries talk about. The success of the peasant insurrection, the victory of the democratic revolution will merely clear the way for a genuine and decisive struggle for Socialism on the basis of a democratic republic. In this struggle the peasantry as a landowning class will play the same treacherous, vacillating part as is now being played by the bourgeoisie in the struggle for democracy. To forget this is to forget Socialism, to deceive oneself and others as to the real interests and tasks of the proletariat.

In order to leave no gaps in the presentation of the views held by Marx in 1848, it is necessary to note one essential difference between German Social-Democracy of that time

(or the Communist Party of the Proletariat, to use the language of that period) and present-day Russian Social-Democracy. Here is what Mehring says:

"The *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* appeared in the political arena as the 'organ of democracy.' The red thread that ran through all its articles is unmistakable. But directly, it championed the interests of the bourgeois revolution against absolutism and feudalism more than the interests of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie. Very little is to be found in its columns about the separate working-class movement during the years of the revolution, although one should not forget that along with it there appeared twice a week, under the editorship of Moll and Schapper, a special organ of the Cologne Workers' League. At any rate, the present-day reader will be struck by the little attention the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* paid to the German working-class movement of its day, although its most capable mind, Stephan Born, was a pupil of Marx and Engels in Paris and Brussels and in 1848 was the Berlin correspondent for their newspaper. Born relates in his *Memoirs* that Marx and Engels never expressed a single word in disapproval of his agitation among the workers; nevertheless, it appears probable from subsequent declarations of Engels' that they were dissatisfied, at least with the methods of this agitation. Their dissatisfaction was justified inasmuch as Born was obliged to make many concessions to the as yet totally undeveloped class consciousness of the proletariat in the greater part of Germany, concessions which do not stand the test of criticism from the viewpoint of the *Communist Manifesto*. Their dissatisfaction was unjustified inasmuch as Born managed nonetheless to maintain the agitation conducted by him on a relatively high plane.... Without doubt, Marx and Engels were historically and politically right in thinking that the primary interest of the working class was to push the bourgeois revolution forward as far as possible. . . . Nevertheless, a remarkable proof of how the

elementary instinct of the working-class movement is able to correct the conceptions of the greatest minds is provided by the fact that in April 1849 they declared in favour of a specific workers' organization and decided to participate in the workers' congress, which was being prepared especially by the East Elbe (Eastern Prussia) proletariat."

Thus, it was only in April 1849, after the revolutionary newspaper had been appearing for almost a year (the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* began publication on June 1, 1848) that Marx and Engels declared in favour of a special workers' organization! Until then they were merely running an "organ of democracy" unconnected by any organizational ties with an independent workers' party. This fact, monstrous and improbable as it may appear from our present-day standpoint, clearly shows us what an enormous difference there is between the German Social-Democratic Party of those days and the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party of today. This fact shows how much less the proletarian features of the movement, the proletarian current within it, were in evidence in the German democratic revolution (because of the backwardness of Germany in 1848 both economically and politically—its disunity as a state). This should not be forgotten in judging Marx's repeated declarations during this period and somewhat later about the need for organizing an independent proletarian party. Marx arrived at this practical conclusion only as a result of the experience of the democratic revolution, almost a year later—so philistine, so petty-bourgeois was the whole atmosphere in Germany at that time. To us this conclusion is an old and solid acquisition of half a century's experience of international Social-Democracy—an acquisition with which we *began* to organize the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party. In our case there can be no question, for instance, of revolutionary proletarian newspapers being outside the Social-Democratic Party of the proletariat, or

of their appearing even for a moment simply as "organs of democracy."

But the contrast which had hardly begun to reveal itself between Marx and Stephan Born exists in our case in a form which is more developed by reason of the more powerful manifestation of the proletarian current in the democratic stream of our revolution. Speaking of the probable dissatisfaction of Marx and Engels with the agitation conducted by Stephan Born, Mehring expresses himself too mildly and too evasively. This is what Engels wrote of Born in 1885 (in his preface to the *Ent-hüllungen über den Kommunistenprocess zu Köln*. Zürich, 1885\*):

The members of the Communist League<sup>15</sup> everywhere stood at the head of the extreme democratic movement, proving thereby that the League was an excellent school of revolutionary action. "... the compositor Stephan Born, who had worked in Brussels and Paris as an active member of the League, founded a Workers' Brotherhood" ("Arbeiterverbrüderung") "in Berlin which became fairly widespread and existed until 1850. Born, a very talented young man, who, however, was a bit too much in a hurry to become a political figure, 'fraternized' with the most miscellaneous ragtag and bobtail" (Kretzi und Plethi) "in order to get a crowd together, and was not at all the man who could bring unity into the conflicting tendencies, light into the chaos. Consequently, in the official publications of the association the views represented in the *Communist Manifesto* were mingled hodgepodge with guild recollections and guild aspirations, fragments of Louis Blanc and Proudhon, protectionism, etc.; in short, they wanted to please everybody" (allen alles sein). "In particular, strikes, trade unions and producers' cooperatives were set going and it was forgotten

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\* *Revelations About the Trial of the Communists at Cologne*, Zürich, 1885.—Tr.

*that above all it was a question of first conquering, by means of political victories, the field in which alone such things could be realized on a lasting basis.*" (Our italics.) "When, afterwards, the victories of the reaction made the leaders of the Brotherhood realize the necessity of taking a direct part in the revolutionary struggle, they were naturally left in the lurch by the confused mass which they had grouped around themselves. Born took part in the Dresden uprising in May 1849 and had a lucky escape. But, in contrast to the great political movement of the proletariat, the Workers' Brotherhood proved to be a pure separate league, which to a large extent existed only on paper and played such a subordinate role that the reaction did not find it necessary to suppress it until 1850, and its surviving branches until several years later. Born, whose real name was Buttermilch" (Buttermilk),\* "has not become a big political figure but a petty Swiss professor, who no longer translates Marx into guild language but the meek Renan into his own fulsome German."

That is how Engels judged the two tactics of Social-Democracy in the democratic revolution!

Our new *Iskra*-ists are also pushing towards "Economism," and with such unreasonable zeal as to earn the praises of the monarchist bourgeoisie for their "seeing the

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\* In translating Engels I made a mistake in the first edition by taking the word *Buttermilch* to be not a proper noun but a common noun. This mistake naturally afforded great delight to the Mensheviks. Koltsov wrote that I had "Rendered Engels more profound" (reprinted in *Two Years*, a collection of articles) and Plekhanov even now recalls this mistake in the *Tovarishch*—in short, it afforded an excellent pretext to slur over the question of the two tendencies in the working-class movement of 1848 in Germany, the Born tendency (akin to our Economists) and the Marxist tendency. To take advantage of the mistake of an opponent, even if it was only on the question of Born's name, is more than natural. But to use a correction to a translation to slur over the question of the two tactics is to dodge the real issue. (Author's note to the 1907 edition.—Ed.)

light." They too collect around themselves a motley crowd, flattering the "Economists," demagogically attracting the undeveloped masses by the slogans of "initiative," "democracy," "autonomy," etc., etc. Their labour unions, too, exist only on the pages of the Khlestakov<sup>16</sup> new *Iskra*. Their slogans and resolutions betray a similar failure to understand the tasks of the "great political movement of the proletariat."

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V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*,  
Fourth Russian Edition,  
Vol. IX, pp. 1-119

## THE ATTITUDE OF SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY TOWARD THE PEASANT MOVEMENT

The tremendous importance of the peasant movement in the democratic revolution through which Russia is now passing has been repeatedly explained in the entire Social-Democratic press. As is well known, the Third Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. adopted a special resolution on this question in order to define more exactly and to coordinate the activities of the whole party of the class-conscious proletariat precisely with regard to the peasant movement of the present day. Despite the fact that the resolution was prepared in advance (the first draft was published in the *Vperyod*, No. 11, March 10 [23], 1905\*), despite the fact that it was carefully gone over at the Party Congress, which took pains to formulate the views that had already been established throughout the Russian Social-Democratic movement—in spite of all this, the resolution has caused perplexity among a number of comrades working in Russia. The Saratov Committee has unanimously declared this resolution to be unacceptable (see the *Proletary*, No. 10). Unfortunately, the desire we expressed at the time, to receive an explanation of that verdict, has not been satisfied as yet. All we know is that the Saratov Committee has declared the agrarian resolution passed by the new *Iskra* Conference also unacceptable—hence it is what is common to both

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\* See Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. VIII, pp. 208-09.—*Ed.*



resolutions that dissatisfies them, and not what distinguishes one from the other.

New material on this question is provided by a letter we have received from a Moscow comrade (issued in the form of a hectographed leaflet). We publish this letter in full:

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE AND TO THE  
COMRADES WORKING IN THE RURAL DISTRICTS

Comrades! The regional organization of the Moscow Committee has definitely taken up work among the peasants. The lack of experience in organizing such work, the special conditions prevailing in the rural districts of Central Russia, and also the lack of clarity in the directives contained in the resolutions of the Third Congress on this question and the almost complete absence of material in the periodical and other press on work among the peasantry, compel us to appeal to the Central Committee to send us detailed directives, covering both the principles and the practical questions involved, while we ask you comrades who are doing similar work to acquaint us with the practical knowledge your experience has given you.

We consider it necessary to inform you about the perplexity that has arisen among us upon perusal of the resolution of the Third Congress "on the attitude toward the peasant movement," and about the organizational plan which we are already beginning to apply in our work in the rural districts.

"§ a) To carry on propaganda among the broad strata of the people to the effect that Social-Democracy sets itself the task of giving most energetic support to all the revolutionary measures undertaken by the peasantry that are capable of improving its position, including confiscation of the land belonging to the landlords, the State, the church, the monasteries, and the imperial family" (from the resolution of the Third Congress of the R.S.D.L.P.).

First of all, it is not made clear in this paragraph how the Party organizations will, or should, carry on their propaganda. Propaganda requires, first and foremost, an organization which is very close to those whom it is intended to propagandize. The question as to whether this organization is to be committees consisting of the rural proletariat, or whether other organizational means of conducting oral and written propaganda may be adopted, is left open.

The same may be said of the promise to render energetic support. To render support, and energetic support at that, is also possible only if local organizations exist. The question of "energetic support" seems

to us to be extremely hazy in general. Can Social-Democracy support the expropriation of those landlords' estates which are farmed most intensively, employ machinery, cultivate high-grade crops, etc.? The transfer of such estates to petty-bourgeois proprietors, however important it may be to improve their position, would be a step back from the standpoint of the capitalist development of the given estate. In our opinion, we, as Social-Democrats, should have made a reservation on this point of "support": "provided the expropriation of this land and its transference to peasant (petty-bourgeois) ownership results in a higher form of economic development on these estates."

Further:

"§ d) To strive for the independent organization of the rural proletariat, for its fusion with the urban proletariat under the banner of the Social-Democratic Party, and for the inclusion of its representatives in the peasant committees."

Doubts arise with regard to the latter part of this paragraph. The fact is that the bourgeois-democratic organizations, such as the Peasant League and reactionary-utopian organizations, such as those of the Socialist-Revolutionaries, organize under their banner both the bourgeois and the proletarian elements of the peasantry. By electing our own representatives of the rural proletarian organizations to such "peasant" committees, we shall be contradicting ourselves, our views regarding entering a bloc, etc.

Here, too, we believe, amendments, and very serious ones, are needed.

These are a few general remarks on the resolutions of the Third Congress. It is desirable to have these analyzed as soon and in as great detail as possible.

As regards the plan for a "rural" organization in our Regional Organization, we are obliged to work under conditions which the resolutions of the Third Congress wholly ignore. First of all, we must note that the territory we cover—the Moscow Gubernia and the adjoining uyezds of the neighbouring gubernias—is mainly an industrial area with a relatively undeveloped system of handicraft industries and with a very small section of the population engaged *exclusively* in agriculture. Huge textile mills, each employing 10,000 to 15,000 workers, are interspersed among small factories, employing 500 to 1,000 workers, and scattered in out-of-the-way hamlets and villages. One would think that under such conditions Social-Democracy would find a most favourable field for its activity here, but facts have proved that such bird's-eye view premises do not stand criticism. Even now, in spite of the fact that some of the factories have been in existence for 40-50 years, the

overwhelming majority of our "proletariat" has not become divorced from the land. The "village" has such a strong hold over it, that none of the psychological and other characteristics which a "pure" proletarian acquires in the course of collective work develop among our proletarians. The farming carried on by our "proletarians" is of a peculiar mongrel type. A weaver employed in a factory hires an agricultural labourer to till his patch of land. His wife (if she is not working in the factory), his children, and the aged and invalid members of the family work on this same piece of land, and he himself will work on it when he becomes old or crippled, or is fired for violent or suspicious behaviour. Such "proletarians" can hardly be called proletarians. Their economic status is that of paupers. In ideology they are petty bourgeois. They are ignorant and conservative. From among them "Black-Hundred" elements are recruited. Lately, however, even among them class consciousness has begun to awaken. Using "pure" proletarians as footholds, we are endeavouring to rouse these ignorant masses from their age-long slumber, and not without success. The footholds are increasing in number, and in places are becoming firmer, the paupers are coming under our influence, are beginning to adopt our ideology, both in the factory and in the village. And we believe that it will not be unorthodox to form organizations in an environment that is not "purely" proletarian. We have no other environment, and if we were to insist on orthodoxy and organize only the rural "proletariat," we would have to dissolve our organizations and the organizations in the neighbouring districts. We know we shall have difficulties in combating the burning desire to expropriate the arable and other land neglected by the landlords, or those lands which the holy fathers in hoods and cassocks have not been able to farm properly. We know that bourgeois democracy, from the "democratic"-monarchist faction (such a faction exists in the Ruza Uyezd) down to the "Peasant" League, will fight us for influence among the "paupers," but we shall arm the latter to oppose the former. We shall make use of all the Social-Democratic forces in the region, both intellectuals and proletarian workers, to set up and consolidate our Social-Democratic committees of "paupers." And we shall do this in accordance with the following plan. In each uyezd centre, or big industrial centre, we shall set up uyezd committees of the groups that work under the Regional Organization. In addition to setting up factory committees in its district, the uyezd committee will also set up "peasant" committees. For reasons of secrecy, these committees should not be large, and should consist of the most revolutionary and capable pauperized peasants. In places where there are both factories and peasants—it is necessary to organize workers and peasants in a single sub-group committee.

In the first place, such committees should have a clear and exact idea of local conditions: A) The agrarian relationships: 1) Peasant allotments, leases, form of tenure (communal, by households, etc.); 2) The local land: a) to whom it belongs; b) the amount of land; c) what relation the peasants have to this land; d) on what terms the land is held: 1) labour rent, 2) exorbitant rent for "otrezki," etc.; e) indebtedness to kulaks, landlords, etc. B) Imposts, taxes, the rate of assessment of peasant and landlord lands respectively. C) Migratory and handicraft, industries, passports, winter hiring,<sup>17</sup> etc. D) Local factories and plants: the working conditions in these: 1) wages; 2) working day; 3) treatment by the management; 4) housing conditions, etc. E) The administration: the *zemsky nachalniki*, the village elder, the clerk, the volost judges, constables, priest. F) The Zemstvo: the councillors representing the peasants, the Zemstvo employees: the teacher, doctor, libraries, schools, taverns. G) Volost assemblies: their composition and procedure. H) Organizations: the Peasant League, Socialist-Revolutionaries, Social-Democrats.

After acquainting itself with all this data, the Peasant Social-Democratic Committee must get such decisions passed by the village assemblies as may be necessitated by any abnormal state of affairs. Simultaneously with this, such a committee must conduct intense propaganda and agitation for the ideas of Social-Democracy among the masses, organize circles, impromptu meetings, mass meetings, distribute leaflets and other literature, collect money for the Party and keep in touch with the Regional Organization through the uyezd group.

If we succeed in setting up a number of such committees the success of Social-Democracy will be assured.

#### *Regional Organizer*

It goes without saying that we shall not undertake the task of working out the detailed practical directives to which the comrade refers: this is a matter for the comrades on the spot and for the central body in Russia, which is guiding the practical work. We propose to take the opportunity presented by our Moscow comrade's interesting letter to explain the resolution of the Third Congress and the urgent tasks of the Party in general. It is obvious from the letter that the perplexity caused by the resolution of the Third Congress is only partly due to theoretical doubts. The other source is a *new* question, which has not arisen

before, about the interrelation between the "revolutionary peasant committees" and the "*Social-Democratic committees*" which are working among the peasants. The very fact that this question has been raised testifies to the great progress Social-Democratic work among the peasants has made. Relatively detail questions are already being pushed into the forefront by the practical requirements of "rural" agitation, which is becoming a fixed feature and assuming stable, permanent forms. And the author of the letter keeps forgetting that when he is blaming the Congress resolution for lack of clarity, he is, in fact, seeking an answer to a question which the Party Congress did not raise and could not have raised.

For instance, the author is not quite right when he says that both propagation of our ideas and support for the peasant movement are possible "only" if we have our organizations in the particular localities. Of course such organizations are desirable, and as the work increases they will become necessary; but such work is possible and necessary even where no such organizations exist. In all our activities, even when carried on exclusively among the urban proletariat, we must never lose sight of the peasant question and must give wide circulation to the declaration made by the *whole party of the class-conscious proletariat* as represented by the Third Congress, namely, that we support a peasant uprising. The peasants must learn this—from literature, from the workers, from special organizations, etc. The peasants must learn that the Social-Democratic proletariat, in giving this support, will *not shrink* from any form of confiscation of the land (i.e., expropriation without compensation to the owners).

The author of the letter raises a theoretical question in this connection, viz., whether the demand for the expropriation of the big estates and their transfer to "peasant, petty-bourgeois ownership" should not be circumscribed by a special reservation. But by proposing such a reser-

vation the author has arbitrarily limited the purport of the resolution of the Third Congress. There is *not a word* in the resolution about the Social-Democratic Party undertaking to support the transfer of the confiscated land to petty-bourgeois proprietors. The resolution states: we support . . . "including confiscation," i.e., including expropriation without compensation, but the resolution does not in any way decide to whom the expropriated land is to be given. It was not by chance that the question was left open: it is obvious from the articles in the *Vperyod* (Nos. 11, 12, 15)\* that it was deemed unwise to decide the question in advance. It was stated there, for instance, that under a democratic republic Social-Democracy cannot pledge itself and tie its hands with regard to the nationalization of the land.

Indeed, unlike the petty-bourgeois Socialist-Revolutionaries, we lay the main emphasis *at the present time* on the revolutionary-democratic aspect of the peasant uprising and the special organization of the rural proletariat into a class party. The crux of the question now is not schemes of "Black Redistribution," or nationalization, but that the peasants should recognize the need of and carry out a *revolutionary* breakup of the old order. That is why the Socialist-Revolutionaries emphasize "socialization," etc., while we lay stress on *revolutionary peasant committees*. Without the latter, say we, all change amounts to nothing. With them and supported by them the *victory of the peasant uprising* is possible.

We must assist the peasant uprising in every way, including confiscation of the land, *but certainly not including all sorts of petty-bourgeois schemes*. We support the peasant movement, in so far as it is a revolutionary-democratic movement. We are making ready (making ready at once, immediately) to fight against it in so far as it becomes reac-

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\* See Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. VIII, pp. 204-09, 218-23 and 286-300.—Ed.

tionary and antiproletarian. The whole essence of Marxism lies in that double task, which only those who do not understand Marxism can vulgarize or compress into a single and simple task.

Let us take a concrete instance. Let us assume that the peasant uprising has been victorious. The revolutionary peasant committees and the provisional revolutionary government (relying, in part, on these very committees) can proceed to the confiscation of any big property. We are in favour of confiscation, as we have already declared. But to whom shall we recommend that the confiscated land be given? On this question we have not tied our hands nor shall we ever do so by declarations like those rashly proposed by the author of the letter. The author of the letter has forgotten that the resolution of the Third Congress speaks of "*purging the revolutionary-democratic content of the peasant movement of all reactionary admixtures*"—that is one point—and, secondly, of the need "*in all cases and under all circumstances for an independent organization of the rural proletariat.*" These are our directives. There will always be reactionary admixtures in the peasant movement, and we declare war on them in advance. Class antagonism between the rural proletariat and the peasant bourgeoisie is inevitable, and we reveal it in advance, explain it and prepare for the struggle on the basis of it. One of the immediate causes of such struggle may very likely be the question: to whom shall the confiscated land be given, and how? We do not gloss over that question, nor do we promise equal distribution, "socialization," etc. What we do say is: we shall fight this out later on, fight again, on a new field and with other allies: then we shall certainly be with the rural proletariat, with the entire working class against the peasant bourgeoisie. In practice, this may mean the transfer of the land to the class of small peasant proprietors—wherever big estates based on bondage and feudal servitude still prevail, where there are as yet no material

prerequisites for large-scale socialist production; it may mean nationalization—provided the democratic revolution is completely victorious; or the big capitalist estates may be transferred to *workers' associations*; for from the democratic revolution we shall at once, and just in accordance with the measure of our strength, the strength of the class-conscious and organized proletariat, begin to pass to the socialist revolution. We stand for uninterrupted revolution. We shall not stop halfway. The reason we do not now and immediately promise all sorts of “socialization,” is just because we know what is actually required for that task, and do not gloss over but reveal the new class struggle that is maturing within the ranks of the peasantry.

At first we support the peasantry in general against the landlords, support it to the end and by all means, including confiscation, and then (or rather not “then,” but at the same time) we support the proletariat against the peasantry in general. To try *now* to calculate what the combination of forces will be within the peasantry on “the morrow” of the revolution (the democratic revolution) is sheer utopia. Without descending to adventurism or going against our scientific conscience, without striving for cheap popularity, we can and do say *only one thing*: we shall put every effort into assisting the entire peasantry to make the democratic revolution, *in order thereby to make it easier* for us, the Party of the proletariat, to pass on, as quickly as possible, to the new and higher task—the socialist revolution. We hold forth no promises of harmony, equalization or “socialization” as a result of the victory of the *present* peasant uprising—on the contrary, we “promise” a new struggle, new inequality, a new revolution, toward which we are striving. Our doctrine is not as “sweet” as the fairy tales of the Socialist-Revolutionaries, but let whoever wants to be fed solely on sweets join the Socialist-Revolutionaries; we shall say to such people: good riddance.

In our opinion this Marxian standpoint also settles the



question of the committees. In our opinion *there should be no Social-Democratic peasant committees*: if they are Social-Democratic that means they are not purely peasant committees; if they are peasant committees that means they are not purely proletarian, not Social-Democratic committees. A host of people would like to confuse these two, but we are not of their number. Wherever possible we shall strive to set up *our* committees, committees of the *Social-Democratic Labour Party*. They will be joined by peasants, paupers, intellectuals, prostitutes (a worker recently asked us in a letter why not carry on agitation among prostitutes), soldiers, teachers, workers—in short, *all Social-Democrats and none but Social-Democrats*. These committees will conduct the whole of Social-Democratic work, in its entire scope, striving, however, to organize the rural proletariat separately and particularly, for the Social-Democratic Party is the class party of the proletariat. To consider it “unorthodox” to organize the proletariat which has not entirely freed itself from various relics of the past is a *great mistake* and we would like to think that the corresponding passages of the letter are due simply to a misunderstanding. The urban and industrial proletariat will inevitably be the basic nucleus of our Social-Democratic Labour Party, but we must attract to it, enlighten and organize all toilers and all the exploited, as is stated in our program—all without exception: handicraftsmen, paupers, beggars, servants, tramps, prostitutes—of course, subject to the necessary and obligatory condition that they join the Social-Democratic movement and not that the Social-Democratic movement join them, that they adopt the standpoint of the proletariat and not that the proletariat adopt theirs.

The reader may ask—what is the point, then, of having revolutionary peasant committees? Does this mean that they are not necessary? No, they are necessary. Our ideal is: purely Social-Democratic committees in all rural districts, and then agreements between them and *all* the revolution-

ary-democratic elements, groups and circles of the peasantry for the purpose of establishing revolutionary committees. There is a perfect analogy here to the independence of the Social-Democratic Labour Party in the cities and its alliance with all the revolutionary democrats for the purpose of insurrection. We are in favour of a peasant uprising. We are absolutely opposed to the mixing and merging of heterogeneous class elements and heterogeneous parties. We hold that for the purpose of insurrection Social-Democracy should push forward the *whole* of revolutionary democracy, should assist the *whole* of it to organize, should *march shoulder to shoulder* with it, but without merging with it, to the barricades in the cities and against the landlords and the police in the villages.

Long live the insurrection in town and country against the autocracy! Long live revolutionary Social-Democracy, the vanguard of the entire revolutionary democracy in the present revolution!

*Proletary*, No. 16,  
September 14 (1), 1905

V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*,  
Fourth Russian Edition,  
Vol. IX, pp. 207-15

## THE LESSONS OF THE MOSCOW UPRISING

The publication of the book *Moscow in December 1905* (Moscow, 1906) could not have been more opportune. It is an essential task of the workers' party to assimilate the lessons of the December uprising. Unfortunately, this book is like a barrel of honey spoiled by a spoonful of tar: most interesting material—despite its incompleteness—and incredibly slovenly, incredibly trite conclusions. We shall deal with these conclusions on another occasion;\* at present we shall turn our attention to the burning political question of the day, to the lessons of the Moscow uprising.

The principal form of the December movement in Moscow was a peaceful strike and demonstrations. The vast majority of the worker masses took an active part only in these forms of struggle. But it was the December action in Moscow that convincingly proved that, as an independent and predominant form of struggle, the general strike is out of date, that the movement, with elemental and irresistible force, is breaking out of these narrow bounds and giving rise to a higher form of struggle—insurrection.

In declaring the strike, all the revolutionary parties, all the Moscow unions, sensed and even realized that it must inevitably grow into an uprising. On December 6 the Soviet of Workers' Deputies resolved to "strive to transform the strike into an armed uprising." As a matter of fact, however, none of the organizations were prepared for this. Even the Joint Council of Fighting Squads spoke (*on Decem-*

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\* See Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. XI, pp. 163-66.  
—Ed.

ber 9!) of an uprising as of something very remote, and it is quite evident that it had no hand in or control of the street fighting that took place. The organizations *failed to keep pace* with the growth and range of the movement.

The strike grew into an uprising, primarily as a result of the pressure of the objective conditions that were created after October. The government could no longer be taken by surprise by a general strike: it had already organized the counterrevolution, which was ready for military action. The general course of the Russian Revolution after October, and the sequence of events in Moscow in the December days, have supplied striking proof of one of the profound propositions of Marx: revolution progresses by giving rise to a strong and united counterrevolution, i.e., it compels the enemy to resort to more and more extreme measures of defence and in this way devises more powerful means of attack.

December 7 and 8: a peaceful strike, peaceful mass demonstrations. Evening of the 8th: the siege of the Aquarium.<sup>18</sup> The morning of the 9th: the crowd on Strastnaya Square is attacked by the dragoons. Evening: Fiedler's house is wrecked. Temper rises. The unorganized street crowds, quite spontaneously and hesitatingly, set up the first barricades.

The 10th: artillery fire is opened on the barricades and the crowds in the streets. Barricades are set up more deliberately, and no longer in isolated cases, but on a really mass scale. The whole population is in the streets; all the main centres of the city are covered by a network of barricades. For several days the fighting squads wage a stubborn guerilla fight against the troops, which exhausts the troops and compels Dubasov<sup>19</sup> to beg for reinforcements. Only on December 15 does the superiority of the government forces become complete, and on December 17 the Semyonov Regiment storms the Presnya District, the last stronghold of the uprising.

From strike and demonstrations to isolated barricades. From isolated barricades to the mass erection of barricades

and street fighting against the troops. Over the heads of the organizations, the mass proletarian struggle developed from a strike to an uprising. This is the greatest historical gain the Russian Revolution achieved in December 1905; and like all preceding gains it was purchased at the price of enormous sacrifices. The movement was raised from a general political strike to a higher stage. It compelled the reaction to go to *extremes* in its resistance, and so brought vastly nearer the moment when the revolution will also go to extremes in the application of means of attack. The reaction *cannot go further* than bombard barricades, houses and street crowds. But the revolution can go ever so much further than the Moscow fighting squads, it can go very, very much further in breadth and depth. And the revolution has advanced far since December. The base of the revolutionary crisis has become immeasurably broader—the blade must now be sharpened to a keener edge.

The proletariat sensed the change in the objective conditions of the struggle and the need for a transition from the strike to an uprising sooner than its leaders. As is always the case, practice marched ahead of theory. A peaceful strike and demonstrations immediately ceased to satisfy the workers; they asked: what was to be done next? And they demanded more resolute action. The instructions to set up barricades reached the districts exceedingly late, when barricades were already being erected in the centre. The workers set to in large numbers, *but even this did not satisfy them*; they wanted to know: what is to be done next?—they demanded active measures. In December we, the leaders of the Social-Democratic proletariat, behaved like a commander-in-chief who had arranged the disposition of his troops in such an absurd way that most of them remained out of action. The masses of the workers demanded, but failed to receive, instructions for resolute mass action.

Thus, nothing could be more shortsighted than Plekhanov's view, which is seized upon by all the opportunists,

that the strike was inopportune and should not have been started, and that we "should not have taken to arms." On the contrary, we should have taken to arms more resolutely, energetically and aggressively; we should have explained to the masses that it was impossible to confine ourselves to a peaceful strike and that a fearless and relentless armed fight was indispensable. And now we must at last openly and publicly admit that political strikes are inadequate; we must carry on the widest agitation among the masses in favour of an armed uprising and make no attempt to obscure this question by talk about "preliminary stages," or to befog it in any way. We would be deceiving both ourselves and the people if we concealed from them the fact that the impending revolutionary action must take the form of a desperate, bloody war of extermination.

Such is the first lesson of the December events. Another lesson refers to the character of the uprising, the methods by which it is conducted, and the conditions under which the troops come over to the side of the people. On this, an extremely biased view prevails in the Right wing of our Party. It is alleged that it is impossible to fight modern troops; the troops must become revolutionary. Of course, unless the revolution assumes a mass character and also affects the troops, serious fighting is out of the question. Work must be carried on among the troops, that goes without saying. But we must not imagine that the troops will come over to our side at one stroke, as it were, as a result of persuasion, or their own convictions. The Moscow insurrection clearly proved how stereotyped and lifeless this view is. As a matter of fact, the wavering of the troops, which is inevitable in every truly popular movement, leads to a real *fight for the troops* whenever the revolutionary struggle becomes more acute. The Moscow uprising presented an example of the desperate, frantic struggle for the troops that takes place between the reaction and the revolution. Dubasov himself declared that of the fifteen thou-

sand men of the Moscow garrison only five thousand were reliable. The government restrained the waverers by the most diverse and most desperate measures: they appealed to them, flattered them, bribed them, presented them with watches, money, etc.; they doped them with vodka, they lied to them, threatened them, confined them to barracks and disarmed them; and those soldiers who were suspected of being least reliable were removed by treachery and violence. We must have the courage to confess openly and unreservedly that in this respect we lagged behind the government. We failed to utilize the forces at our disposal to wage an active, bold, resourceful and aggressive fight for the wavering troops, like that successfully waged by the government. We have carried on work in the army and we will redouble our efforts in the future to ideologically "win over" the army. But we shall prove to be miserable pedants if we forget that at the moment of the uprising a physical fight for the army must also be waged.

In the December days the Moscow proletariat taught us magnificent lessons in ideologically "winning over" the troops, as, for example, on December 8 on Strasnaya Square, when the crowd surrounded the Cossacks, mingled and fraternized with them, and persuaded them to turn back. Or on December 10 in the Presnya District, when two working girls, carrying a red flag in a crowd of 10,000 people, rushed out to meet the Cossacks crying: "Kill us! We will not surrender the flag alive!" And the Cossacks were disconcerted and galloped away amidst the shouts of the crowd: "Hurrah for the Cossacks!" These examples of courage and heroism should be impressed forever in the mind of the proletariat.

But here are examples of how we lagged behind Dubasov. On December 9 soldiers were marching down Bolshaya Serpukhovskaya Street singing the *Marseillaise*, on their way to join the insurgents. The workers sent delegates to meet them. Malakhov<sup>20</sup> himself galloped at breakneck speed to-

wards them. The workers were too late, Malakhov reached them first. He delivered a passionate speech, caused the soldiers to waver, surrounded them with dragoons, marched them off to barracks and locked them in. Malakhov reached the soldiers, we did not, although within two days, 150,000 men had risen at our call, and these could and should have organized the patrolling of the streets. Malakhov surrounded the soldiers with dragoons, whereas we failed to surround the Malakhovs with bomb-throwers. We could and should have done this; and long ago the Social-Democratic press (the old *Iskra*) pointed out that it was our duty during an uprising to exterminate ruthlessly all the civil and military chiefs. What took place on Bolshaya Serpukhovskaya Street was apparently in its main features repeated in front of the Nesvizhsky Barracks and the Krutitsky Barracks, and when the workers attempted to "call out" the Ekaterinoslav Regiment, and when delegates were sent to the sappers in Alexandrov, and when the Rostov artillery on its way to Moscow was turned back, and when the sappers were disarmed in Kolomna, and so forth. When the uprising began we proved unequal to our task in the fight for the wavering troops.

December confirmed another of Marx's profound propositions, which the opportunists have forgotten, namely, that insurrection is an art, and that the principal rule of this art is that a desperately bold and irrevocably determined *offensive* must be waged. We have not sufficiently assimilated this truth. We have not sufficiently learnt ourselves, nor have we taught the masses this art, this rule to attack, come what may. We must make up for this with all our energy. It is not enough to take sides on the question of political slogans; it is also necessary to take sides on the question of armed insurrection. Those who are opposed to it, those who do not prepare for it, must be ruthlessly dismissed from the ranks of the supporters of the revolution, sent packing to its enemies, to the traitors or cowards; for



the day is approaching when the force of events and the conditions of the struggle will compel us to separate enemies from friends according to this principle. We must not preach passivity, not mere "waiting" until the troops "come over." No! We must proclaim from the housetops the need for a bold offensive and armed attack, the necessity at such times of exterminating the persons in command of the enemy, and of a most energetic fight for the wavering troops.

The third great lesson taught by Moscow concerns tactics and the organization of the forces for insurrection. Military tactics are determined by the level of military technique. This plain truth was drilled into the ears of the Marxists by Engels. Military technique today is not what it was in the middle of the nineteenth century. It would be folly to contend against artillery in crowds and defend barricades with revolvers. Kautsky was right when he wrote that it is high time now, after Moscow, to revise Engels' conclusions, and that Moscow had inaugurated "*new barricade tactics*." These tactics are the tactics of guerilla warfare. The organization required for such tactics is that of mobile and exceedingly small units, units of ten, three or even two persons. We often meet Social-Democrats now who snigger whenever units of five or units of three are mentioned. But sniggering is only a cheap way of ignoring the *new* question of tactics and organization called forth by street fighting under the conditions imposed by modern military technique. Study carefully the story of the Moscow uprising, gentlemen, and you will understand what connection exists between "units of five" and the question of "new barricade tactics."

Moscow advanced these tactics, but failed to develop them far enough, to apply them to any considerable extent, to a really mass extent. There were too few units, the slogan of bold attack was not issued to the masses of the workers and they did not apply it; the guerilla detachments were too uniform in character, their arms and methods were

inadequate, their ability to lead the crowd was almost undeveloped. We must make up for all this and we shall do so by learning from the experience of Moscow, by spreading this experience among the masses and by stimulating their creative efforts to develop this experience still further. And the guerilla warfare and mass terror which have been going on in Russia everywhere and almost continuously since December will undoubtedly help the masses to learn the correct tactics to be applied during an uprising. Social-Democracy must recognize this mass terror and incorporate it into its tactics, organizing and controlling it, of course, subordinating it to the interests and conditions of the working-class movement and the general revolutionary struggle, while eliminating and ruthlessly lopping off the "hooligan" perversion of this guerilla warfare which was so magnificently and ruthlessly suppressed by our Moscow comrades during the uprising and by the Letts during the notorious Lettish republics.<sup>21</sup>

Military technique has made new progress quite recently. The Japanese war produced the hand grenade. The small arms factories have placed automatic rifles on the market. Both these weapons are already being successfully used in the Russian Revolution, but to a far too inadequate degree. We can and must take advantage of improvements in technique, teach the workers' units to make bombs in large quantities, help them and our fighting squads to obtain supplies of explosives, fuses and automatic rifles. If the masses of the workers take part in uprisings in the towns, if mass attacks are made upon the enemy, if a determined and skilful fight is waged for the troops, who after the Duma, after Sveaborg and Kronstadt,<sup>22</sup> are wavering more than ever—and the participation of rural districts in the general struggle is secured—victory will be ours in the next all-Russian armed uprising.

Let us then more extensively develop our work and more boldly set our tasks, while assimilating the lessons of

the great days of the Russian Revolution. The basis of our work is a correct estimate of class interests and of the requirements of the nation's development at the present time. Around the slogan demanding the overthrow of the tsarist regime and the convocation of a Constituent Assembly by a revolutionary government we are rallying and shall continue to rally an increasing section of the proletariat, the peasantry and the army. As hitherto, the basis and chief content of our work is to develop the consciousness of the masses. But let us not forget that, in addition to this general, constant and fundamental task, times like the present in Russia impose other, particular and special tasks. Let us not become pedants and philistines, let us not evade these special tasks of the moment, these special tasks of the given forms of struggle, by meaningless references to our permanent duties, which remain the same in all times and circumstances.

Let us remember that a great mass struggle is approaching. It will be an armed uprising. It must, as far as possible, be simultaneous. The masses must know that they are entering upon an armed, bloody and desperate struggle. Contempt for death must become widespread among the masses and ensure victory. The offensive against the enemy must be most energetic; attack and not defence must become the slogan of the masses; the ruthless extermination of the enemy will be their task; the organization of the struggle will become mobile and flexible; the wavering elements among the troops will be drawn into the active struggle. The party of the class-conscious proletariat must do its duty in this great struggle.

*Proletary*, No. 2,  
September 11 (August 29), 1906

V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*,  
Fourth Russian Edition,  
Vol. XI, pp. 145-52

## THE BOYCOTT

The Left-wing Social-Democrats must reconsider the question of boycotting the State Duma. It should be borne in mind that we have always presented this question concretely, and in connection with a definite political situation. For instance, *Proletary* (Geneva) wrote that "it would be ridiculous to foreswear making use even of the Bulygin Duma"\*—if it could be born. And in referring to the Witte Duma<sup>23</sup> in the pamphlet *The State Duma and Social-Democracy*, 1906 (by N. Lenin and F. Dan), N. Lenin wrote: "We must discuss the question of tactics once again, in a business-like manner. . . . The situation today is not what it was" at the time of the Bulygin Duma (see p. 2 of the pamphlet cited).\*\*

The principal difference between revolutionary Social-Democracy and opportunist Social-Democracy on the question of boycott is as follows: the opportunists in all circumstances confine themselves to applying the stereotyped method copied from a specific period in the history of German Socialism. We must utilize representative institutions; the Duma is a representative institution; therefore boycott is anarchism, and we must go into the Duma. All the arguments used by our Mensheviks, and especially by Plekhanov, on this topic, could be reduced to this childish-simply simple syllogism. The Menshevik resolution on the importance of representative institutions in a revolutionary

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\* See Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. IX, p. 159.—Ed.

\*\* *Ibid.*, Vol. X, pp. 86-87.—Ed.

epoch (see *Partiiniye Izvestia*, No. 2) strikingly reveals the stereotyped and antihistorical nature of their argument.

The revolutionary Social-Democrats, on the contrary, emphasize the necessity of carefully appraising the concrete political situation. It is impossible to cope with the tasks of the revolutionary epoch in Russia by copying in a biased manner the latest German pattern, forgetting the lessons of 1847-48. The progress of our revolution will be altogether incomprehensible if we confine ourselves to making bare contrasts between "anarchist" boycott and Social-Democratic participation in elections. Learn from the history of the Russian Revolution, gentlemen!

This history has *proved* that the tactics of boycotting the Bulygin Duma were the only correct tactics at that time, and were entirely justified by events. Whoever forgets this and argues about boycott without taking the lessons of the Bulygin Duma into account (as the Mensheviks always do) is certifying his own mental poverty, his inability to explain and take into account one of the most important and eventful periods of the Russian Revolution. The tactics of boycotting the Bulygin Duma were based on a correct appraisal of the temper of the revolutionary proletariat and of the objective features of the situation, which made an immediate general outbreak inevitable.

Let us pass on to the *second* lesson of history—to the Witte, Cadet Duma. Nowadays we often hear Social-Democratic intellectuals making repentant speeches about the boycott of that Duma. The fact that it did assemble and undoubtedly rendered indirect service to the revolution is considered to be sufficient reason for repentantly confessing that the boycott of the Witte Duma had been a mistake.

Such a view, however, is extremely biased and shortsighted. It fails to take into consideration a number of very important facts of the period prior to the Witte Duma, the period of its existence and the period after its dissolution.

Remember that the election law for that Duma was promulgated on December 11, at a time when the insurgents were waging an armed fight for a Constituent Assembly. Remember that *even the Menshevik "Nachalo"* wrote at the time: "The proletariat will also sweep away the Witte Duma *just as* it swept away the Bulygin Duma." Under such circumstances the proletariat could not and should not have surrendered to the tsar without a fight the power to convene the first representative assembly in Russia. The proletariat had to fight against the strengthening of the autocracy by means of loans obtained on the security of the Witte Duma.<sup>24</sup> The proletariat had to combat the constitutional illusions on which, in the spring of 1906, the election campaign of the Cadets and the elections among the peasantry were *entirely* based. At that time, when the importance of the Duma was being immeasurably exaggerated, the only means of combating such illusions was the boycott. The degree to which the *spread* of constitutional illusions was connected with participation in the election campaign and in the elections in the spring of 1906 is strikingly revealed by the attitude adopted by our Mensheviks. Suffice it to recall that, in spite of the warnings of the Bolsheviks, in the resolution of the Fourth (Unity) Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party the Duma was referred to as a "*power*"! Another instance: with complete self-assurance, Plekhanov wrote: "The government will *fall* into the abyss if it dissolves the Duma." In reply to him it was said at that time: we must prepare to *push* the enemy into the abyss and not, like the Cadets, place hopes on its "falling" into the abyss by itself. And how soon the words then uttered were proved correct!\*

It was the duty of the proletariat to exert every effort to preserve the independence of its tactics in our revolution, namely: together with the class-conscious peasantry against

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\* See Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. X, p. 440.—Ed.

the vacillating and treacherous Liberal-monarchist bourgeoisie. But it was *impossible* to employ these tactics during the elections to the Witte Duma owing to a number of circumstances, both objective and subjective, which, in the vast majority of localities in Russia, would have made participation in the elections tantamount to the workers' party tacitly supporting the Cadets. The proletariat could not and should not have adopted halfhearted and artificially concocted tactics, prompted by "cunning" and consternation, of elections for an unknown purpose, of elections to the Duma, but not for the Duma. And yet it is a historical fact, which the silence, subterfuges and evasions of the Mensheviks cannot remove, that *not one* of them, not even Plekhanov, *dared* advocate in the press that we should go into the Duma. It is a fact that *not a single* call was issued in the press to go into the Duma. It is a fact that the Mensheviks themselves, in the leaflet issued by the Joint Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P., officially recognized the boycott and confined the dispute *only* to the question of the stage at which the boycott was to be adopted. It is a fact that the Mensheviks laid emphasis, not on the elections *to the Duma*, but on the elections *as such*, and even on the process of electing as a means of organizing *for* insurrection and *for* sweeping away the Duma. Events proved, however, that it was impossible to carry on mass agitation during the elections, and that the Duma alone provided certain opportunities for carrying on agitation among the masses.

Whoever really makes an effort to consider and weigh all these complicated facts, both objective and subjective, will see that the Caucasus was but an exception which proved the general rule. He will see that contrite speeches and explaining away the boycott as a piece of "youthful impetuousness" reveal an extremely narrow, superficial and shortsighted estimation of events.

The dissolution of the Duma has now clearly demonstrated that in the conditions prevailing in the spring of

1906 the boycott, on the whole, was the right tactics and that it was useful. Under the conditions which *then* prevailed, *only* by means of the boycott could the Social-Democrats fulfil their duty of giving the people the necessary warning against the tsar's constitution and supplying the necessary criticism of the chicanery of the Cadets during the elections; and both (warning and criticism) were strikingly substantiated by the dissolution of the Duma.

Here is a small instance to illustrate the above. In the spring of 1906, Mr. Vodovozov, who is half-Cadet and half-Menshevik, was wholeheartedly in favour of participating in the elections and supporting the Cadets. Yesterday (August 11) he wrote in *Tovarishch* that the Cadets "wanted to be a parliamentary party in a country that has no parliament and a constitutional party in a country that has no constitution"; that "the whole character of the Cadet Party has been determined by the fundamental contradiction that exists between a radical program and quite non-radical tactics."

The Bolsheviks could not desire a greater triumph than this admission on the part of a Left Cadet or Right-wing Plekhanovite.

However, while absolutely rejecting fainthearted and shortsighted speeches of repentance, as well as the silly explanation of the boycott as "youthful impetuosity," we do not by any means reject the *new* lessons of the Cadet Duma. It would be mere pedantry to hesitate openly to admit these new lessons and take them into account. History has shown that when the Duma assembles opportunities arise for carrying on useful agitation both from within the Duma and around it; that the tactics of joining forces with the revolutionary peasantry against the Cadets can be applied in the Duma. This may seem paradoxical, but such, undoubtedly, is the irony of history: it was the Cadet Duma that clearly demonstrated to the masses the correctness of what we might briefly describe as "anti-Ca-



det" tactics. History has ruthlessly confuted all constitutional illusions and all "faith in the Duma"; but history has undoubtedly proved that that institution is of some, though modest, use to the revolution as a platform for agitation, for exposing the true "nature" of the political parties, etc.

Hence, the conclusion: It would be ridiculous to shut our eyes to realities. The time has now come when the revolutionary Social-Democrats must cease to be boycottists. We shall not refuse to go into the Second Duma when (or "if") it is convened. We shall not refuse to utilize this arena, but we shall not exaggerate its modest importance; on the contrary, guided by the experience already provided by history, we shall entirely subordinate the struggle we wage in the Duma to another form of struggle, namely, strikes, insurrection, etc. We will call the Fifth Congress of the Party; there we will resolve that *in the event of elections taking place*, it will be necessary to enter into an election agreement, for a few weeks, with the Trudoviks (unless the Fifth Party Congress is convened it will be impossible to conduct a united election campaign; and "blocs with other parties" are absolutely prohibited by the decision of the Fourth Congress). And then we shall utterly rout the Cadets.

This conclusion, however, does not by any means reveal the whole complexity of the task that confronts us. We deliberately emphasized the words: "*in the event of elections taking place*," etc. We do not know yet whether the Second Duma will be convened, when the elections will take place, what the electoral laws will be like, or what the situation will be at that time. Hence, our conclusion suffers from being extremely general: we need it to enable us to sum up past experience, to take note of the lessons of the past, to put the forthcoming questions of tactics on a proper basis; but it is totally inadequate for solving the concrete problems of immediate tactics.

Only Cadets and the "Cadet-like" of all sorts can be satisfied with such a conclusion at the present time, can create "slogans" for themselves out of yearnings for a new Duma and try to persuade the government of the desirability of convening it at the earliest date, etc. Only conscious or unconscious traitors to the revolution would at *the present time* exert all efforts to divert the inevitable new tide of temper and excitement into the channel of an election and not into that of a fight waged by means of a general strike and uprising.

This brings us to the crux of the question of present-day Social-Democratic tactics. The issue now is not whether we should take part in the elections. To say "yes" or "no" in this case means saying nothing at all about the fundamental problem of the moment. Outwardly, the political situation in August 1906 is similar to that in August 1905, but enormous progress has been made during this period: the forces that are fighting on the respective sides, the forms of the struggle, as the time required for carrying out this or that strategical move—if we may so express it—have become more exactly defined.

The government's plan is clear. It is absolutely right in its calculations when it fixes the date of the convocation of the Duma and does not fix—*contrary to the law*—the date of the elections. The government does not want to tie its hands or show its cards. Firstly, it is gaining time in which to consider the amendment of the election law. Secondly—and this is the most important—it is keeping the date of the elections in reserve until the character and intensity of the new rise of temper can be fully gauged. The government wishes to fix the date of the elections at the particular time (and perhaps in the particular form, i.e., the form of elections) when it *can split and paralyze the incipient uprising*. The government's reasoning is correct: if things remain quiet perhaps we shall not convene the Duma at all, or revert to the Bulygin laws. If, however, a

strong movement arises, then perhaps we shall try to split it by fixing a provisional date for the elections and in this way entice certain cowards and simpletons away from the direct revolutionary struggle.

Liberal blockheads (see *Tovarishch* and *Rech*) so utterly fail to understand the situation that they are of their own accord crawling into the net set by the government. They are trying with might and main "to prove" the need for the Duma and the *desirability* of diverting the rising tide into the channel of an election. But even they cannot deny that the question of what form the impending struggle will assume is still an open one. Today's issue of *Rech* (August 12) admits: "What the peasants will say in the autumn ... we cannot tell as yet." ... "It will be difficult to make any general forecasts until September-October, when the temper of the peasantry is definitely revealed."

The liberal bourgeois remain true to their nature. They do not want to assist actively in choosing the form of the struggle and in moulding the temper of the peasants one way or another, nor are they capable of doing so. The interests of the bourgeoisie demand that the old regime be not overthrown, but merely weakened, and that a Liberal Cabinet be formed.

The interests of the proletariat demand the complete overthrow of the old, tsarist regime and the convocation of a Constituent Assembly with full power. Its interests demand the most active intervention in moulding the temper of the peasants, in choosing the most resolute forms of struggle, as well as the best moment for it. On no account must we withdraw, or obscure, the slogan: convocation of a Constituent Assembly by revolutionary means, i.e., through the medium of a provisional revolutionary government. We must concentrate all efforts on explaining the conditions of insurrection: that it must be combined with the strike movement; that all the revolutionary forces must be rallied and prepared for it, etc. We must resolutely take the path

that was indicated in the well-known manifestoes, "To the Army and Navy" and "To All the Peasants," which were signed by the "bloc" of all revolutionary organizations, including the Trudovik group. Lastly, we must take special care that the government does not under any circumstances succeed in splitting, stopping, or weakening the incipient uprising by ordering elections. In this respect the lessons of the Cadet Duma must be absolutely binding for us, viz., the lessons that the Duma campaign is a subordinate and secondary form of struggle, and that, owing to the objective conditions of the moment, the direct revolutionary movement of the broad masses of the people still remains the principal form of struggle.

Of course, the tactics of subordinating the Duma campaign to the main struggle, of assigning a secondary role to that campaign, keeping it in reserve for the contingency of an unfavourable outcome of the battle, or of the postponement of the battle until experience of the Second Duma is obtained—such tactics may, if you like, be described as the old boycott tactics. On formal grounds this description might be justified, because, apart from the work of agitation and propaganda, which is always obligatory, "preparation for elections" consists of minute technical preparations, which can very rarely be made a long time before the elections. We do not want to argue about words; in substance, these tactics are the logical *development* of the old tactics, but not a *repetition* of them; they are a deduction drawn from the last boycott, but not the last boycott itself.

To sum up. We must take into account the experience of the Cadet Duma and spread its lessons among the masses. We must prove to them that the Duma is "useless," that the Constituent Assembly is essential, that the Cadets are wavering; we must demand that the Trudoviks throw off the yoke of the Cadets, and we must support the former against the latter. We must recognize at once the need for

an election agreement between the Social-Democrats and the Trudoviks in the event of new elections taking place. We must exert all our efforts to counteract the government's plan to split the uprising by ordering elections. Advocating their tried revolutionary slogans with greater energy than ever, Social-Democrats must exert every effort to rally all the revolutionary elements and classes more closely, to convert the upsurge which is very probable in the near future into an armed uprising of the whole of the people against the tsarist government.

*Proletary*, No. 1,  
September 3 (August 21), 1906

V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*,  
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Vol. XI, pp. 118-25

## THE LESSONS OF THE REVOLUTION

Five years have passed since the working class of Russia, in October 1905, struck the first mighty blow at the tsarist autocracy. In those great days the proletariat roused millions of toilers to fight against their oppressors. In the space of a few months of 1905 the proletariat won improvements for which the workers for decades had been waiting in vain from "the powers that be." The proletariat won for the whole Russian people, if only for a short time, something that Russia had never known before—freedom of the press, assembly and association. It swept the Bulygin imitation Duma from its path, forced the tsar to issue a manifesto proclaiming a constitution and once and for all made it impossible for Russia to be ruled without representative bodies.

But the great victories of the proletariat proved to be only half-victories because the tsarist regime was not overthrown. The December uprising ended in defeat and, as the onslaught of the working class, the struggle of the masses, weakened, the tsarist autocracy began, one by one, to deprive the working class of its gains. In 1906 workers' strikes, peasants' and soldiers' outbreaks were much weaker than they were in 1905, but they were still very formidable, nonetheless. The tsar dispersed the First Duma, during the existence of which the popular struggle had begun to rise again, but he did not dare to change the electoral law at once. In 1907 the struggle of the workers grew weaker still, and the tsar, dispersing the Second Duma, staged a *coup d'état* (June 3, 1907); he broke all the most solemn

promises he had made not to promulgate laws without the consent of the Duma and changed the electoral law in such a way that the landowners and the capitalists, the party of the Black-Hundred elements and their servitors, were assured of a majority in the Duma.

Both the victories and the defeats in the revolution taught the Russian people great historical lessons. While we are honouring the fifth anniversary of 1905, let us try to elucidate the main substance of these lessons.

*The first and fundamental lesson* is that *only* the revolutionary struggle of the masses can bring about anything like serious improvements in the lives of the workers and in the administration of the state. No "sympathy" for the workers on the part of educated people, no struggle of lone terrorists, however heroic, could do anything to undermine the tsarist autocracy and the omnipotence of the capitalists. This could be achieved only by the struggle waged by the workers themselves, only by the combined struggle of millions, and when *this* struggle grew weaker the workers immediately began to be deprived of what they had won. The Russian revolution confirmed the sentiments expressed in the song of international labour:

*No saviour from on high deliver,  
No trust have we in prince or peer;  
Our own right hand the chains must shiver,  
Chains of hatred, greed and fear!*

*The second lesson* is that it is not enough to undermine and restrict the power of the tsar. It must be *destroyed*. Until the tsarist regime is destroyed concessions won from the tsar will never be durable. The tsar made concessions when the onslaught of the revolution grew in intensity. When it subsided he took them all back. Only a democratic republic, the overthrow of the tsarist regime, the transfer of power to the hands of the people can deliver Russia from the violence and tyranny of the bureaucracy, from

the Black-Hundred-Octobrist Duma, from the despotic power which the landowners and their servitors wield over the countryside. The increased miseries the peasants and the workers have to bear now, after the revolution, is the price they are paying for the fact that the revolution was weak, that the tsarist regime was not overthrown. The year 1905, then the first two Dumas, and their dispersion, taught the people a great deal, taught them above all to wage a common struggle for political demands. At first, upon awakening to political life, the people demanded concessions from the autocracy: that the tsar should convene a Duma, that he should appoint new ministers in place of the old, that the tsar should "grant" universal suffrage. But the autocracy did not and could not agree to such concessions. The autocracy answered the requests for concessions with bayonets. And then the people began to realize that they would have to *fight* the autocratic regime. Now the Stolypin and the black-reactionary noblemen's Duma is, we may say, hammering this understanding more vigorously into the heads of the peasants. They are hammering it and will drive it right home.

The tsarist autocracy has also learned a lesson from the revolution. It has seen that it cannot rely on the peasants' faith in the tsar. It is now strengthening its power by forming an alliance with the Black-Hundred landowners and the Octobrist factory owners. To overthrow the tsarist autocracy a much stronger onslaught of the revolutionary mass struggle than in 1905 is needed now.

Is such a much greater onslaught possible? The reply to this question brings us to the *third and cardinal* lesson of the revolution. This lesson consists in our having seen *how* the various classes of the Russian people act. Prior to 1905 many thought that the whole people equally aspired to freedom and wanted the same kind of freedom; at least the great majority had no clear understanding of the fact that the different classes of the Russian people had



different views on the struggle for freedom and were striving for different kinds of freedom. The revolution dispelled the mist. At the end of 1905, then later during the existence of the First and Second Dumas, *all* classes of Russian society came out openly. They showed themselves in their true colours, revealed their true ambitions, revealed what they could fight for and how strongly, persistently and vigorously they were able to fight.

The factory workers, the industrial proletariat waged a most determined and stubborn struggle against the autocracy. The proletariat began the revolution with the Ninth of January and mass strikes. The proletariat carried this struggle to its uttermost limit, rising in armed insurrection in December 1905 in defence of the bullet-riddled, knouted and tormented peasantry. The number of workers who went on strike in 1905 was about *three million* (and with the railwaymen, post-office employees, etc., probably reached four million), in 1906—one million, in 1907—three-quarters of a million. The world had never yet seen a strike movement of such magnitude. The Russian proletariat showed what untapped forces there are in the working-class masses when a real revolutionary crisis matures. The strike wave of 1905, the greatest ever known in history, did not exhaust all the militant forces of the proletariat by a long way. For instance, in the Moscow factory region there were 567,000 factory workers while the number of strikers was 540,000, whereas in the St. Petersburg factory region which has 300,000 factory workers there were a million strikers. This means that the workers in the Moscow district had far from developed the persistence in the struggle that was displayed by the St. Petersburg workers. In the Livonian Gubernia (city of Riga) there were 250,000 strikers to the 50,000 workers employed there. In other words each worker on the average struck more than five times in 1905. Now, in all parts of Russia, there cannot possibly be less than three million factory, mining and railway work-

ers, and this number is growing year after year. With a movement as strong as in Riga in 1905 they could turn out an army of *15 million strikers*.

No tsarist regime could withstand such an onslaught. But everybody understands that such an onslaught cannot be evoked artificially, at the wish of the Socialists or progressive workers. Such an onslaught is possible only when the crisis, mass indignation and revolution have spread over the whole country. In order to prepare such an onslaught we must draw the most backward sections of the workers into the struggle, we must devote years and years to persistent, widespread unflagging propaganda, agitation and organizational work, building up and reinforcing proletarian unions and organizations in every form.

In militancy the working class of Russia stood in the forefront of all the other classes of the Russian people. The very conditions of their lives make the workers capable of fighting and compel them to fight. Capital concentrates the workers in great masses in big cities, brings them together, trains them for joint action. At every step the workers come face to face with their chief enemy—the capitalist class. In fighting this enemy the worker becomes a *Socialist*, comes to realize the necessity of a complete reconstruction of society, of the complete abolition of all poverty and all oppression. Becoming Socialists, the workers with self-sacrificing courage fight everything that stands in their path, first and foremost the tsarist regime and the feudal landlords.

The peasants too during the revolution entered the struggle against the landowners and against the government, but their struggle was much weaker. It has been calculated that a majority of the factory workers (about three-fifths) took part in the revolutionary struggle, in strikes, while undoubtedly only a minority of the peasants took a part: in all probability not more than one-fifth or one-fourth. The peasants fought less persistently, more disconnectedly,

with less political consciousness, and many still pinned their hopes on the benignity of the tsar little-father. Properly speaking, in 1905-06, the peasants only frightened the tsar and the landlords a little. But frightening them is no use. They must be *destroyed*; *their* government—the *tsarist* government—must be wiped off the face of the earth. Now Stolypin and the Black-Hundred landlord Duma are trying to create new landowning farmers from the ranks of the rich peasants, to be the allies of the tsar and the Black Hundreds. But the more the tsar and the Duma help the rich peasants to ruin the mass of the peasantry, the more politically conscious does this mass become, the less faith will it preserve in the tsar, the faith of feudal slaves, the faith of downtrodden and ignorant people. Every year sees an increase in the number of agricultural labourers in the countryside, they have nowhere to seek salvation except in an alliance with the urban workers for a common struggle. Every year sees an increase in the number of ruined, utterly impoverished and starving peasants in the countryside; and when the urban proletariat rises, millions upon millions of these peasants will throw themselves into the struggle against the tsar and the landowners with greater determination and solidarity.

The bourgeois liberals, i.e., the liberal landowners, factory owners, lawyers, professors, etc., also took part in the revolution. They constitute the party of "people's freedom" (the Constitutional-Democrats or Cadets). They were lavish in their promises to the people and made a lot of noise about freedom in their newspapers. They had a majority in the First and Second Dumas. They promised to gain freedom by "peaceful means," they deprecated the revolutionary struggle of the workers and peasants. The peasants and many of the peasant deputies ("Trudoviks") believed these promises and followed humbly and obediently at the heels of the liberals, steering clear of the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat. This was the greatest mistake

committed by the peasants (and a lot of townfolk) during the revolution. With one hand, and at that very, very rarely, the liberals assisted the struggle for freedom; but they always offered the other hand to the tsar, promising to preserve and strengthen his power, to make peace between the peasants and the landlords, to "pacify" the "turbulent" workers.

When the revolution reached the point of a decisive struggle against the tsar, the December uprising of 1905, the liberals in a body basely betrayed the freedom of the people and recoiled from the struggle. The tsarist autocracy took advantage of this betrayal of the people's freedom by the liberals, took advantage of the ignorance of the peasants, who to a large extent believed the liberals, and defeated the insurgent workers. And when the proletariat was defeated no Dumas, no blandishments and fair promises of the Cadets could restrain the tsar from abolishing all the vestiges of freedom and restoring the suzerainty and despotic power of the feudal landlords.

The liberals found themselves deceived. The peasants received a severe, but useful lesson. There will be no freedom in Russia as long as the broad masses of the people believe in the liberals, believe in the possibility of "peace" with the tsarist regime and stand aloof from the revolutionary struggle of the workers. No power on earth will be able to prevent the advent of freedom in Russia when the mass of the urban proletariat rises in struggle, brushes aside the wavering and treacherous liberals, enlists under its banner the rural labourers and impoverished peasantry.

And that the proletariat of Russia will rise in such a struggle, that it will take the lead in the revolution again is guaranteed by the whole economic situation in Russia, by all the experience of the revolutionary years.

Five years ago the proletariat struck the first blow at the tsarist autocracy. The first rays of freedom gleamed for the Russian people. Now the tsarist autocracy has been

restored, the feudal lords are reigning and governing again, everywhere violence is again being perpetrated against the workers and peasants and everywhere reigns the Asiatic despotism of the authorities and infamous maltreatment of the people. But the hard lessons will not have been in vain. The Russian people are not what they were before 1905. The proletariat has taught them to fight. The proletariat will lead them to victory.

*Rabochaya Gazeta*, No. 1,  
November 12 (October 30), 1910

V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*,  
Fourth Russian Edition,  
Vol. XVI, pp. 270-77



**THE PERIOD  
OF THE STOLYPIN REACTION  
THE BOLSHEVIKS CONSTITUTE  
THEMSELVES AN INDEPENDENT  
MARXIST PARTY**





## POLITICAL NOTES

The chauvinists are hard at work. Rumours are persistently being spread that the Japanese are arming, that they have concentrated 600 battalions in Manchuria for an attack on Russia. Turkey is alleged to be actively arming with the intention of declaring war on Russia this very spring. A revolt is said to be hatching in the Caucasus with the object of breaking away from Russia (all that is lacking is an outcry about the plans of the Poles!). Feeling against Finland is being worked up by tales that she is arming. A bitter campaign is being conducted against Austria over the building of a railway in Bosnia. The attacks of the Russian press on Germany, which is supposed to be inciting Turkey against Russia, are becoming more violent. The campaign is being conducted not only in the Russian but also in the French press—whose bribery by the Russian government was so opportunely mentioned recently by a Social-Democrat in the Duma.

The serious bourgeois press of the West refuses to regard this campaign as a figment of the imagination of journalists or the affair of sensationmongers. No, it is evident that the "ruling circles"—in other words, the Black-Hundred tsarist government, or a secret court gang like the notorious "Star Chamber," has given a very definite cue, some systematic "line" is being pursued, some "new course" has been adopted. The foreign press traces a direct connection between this chauvinistic campaign and the fact that the doors of the Duma Committee of State Defence have been

closed to all members of the Duma not belonging to that committee, i.e., not only to the revolutionary parties but also to the Cadets; it is even said that the Russian government, as a crowning token of its contempt for "constitutionalism," intends to apply for credits for frontier fortifications not to the whole Duma, but only to the Black-Hundred-Octobrist committee.

Here are a few quotations from European newspapers, newspapers which are anything but socialist and which cannot be suspected of optimism with regard to the Russian revolution:

"The German victories over France (in 1870), as Bismarck once remarked, fired the ambition of the Russian military, and they also reached out for martial laurels. For political, religious and historical reasons, Turkey seemed a most suitable object for this purpose (the war with Turkey of 1877-78). Evidently, the same views are held today by certain Russian circles who have forgotten the lessons of the Japanese war and who do not understand the true needs of the country. As there are no more 'brothers' to liberate in the Balkans, they have to devise other means of influencing Russian public opinion. And these means, to tell the truth, are even more clumsy than those of that time: it is being made out that Russia is surrounded by internal and external foes."

"Russia's ruling circles want to try to bolster up their position by the old methods of forcibly suppressing the internal movement for emancipation and diverting public attention from the deplorable internal situation by arousing nationalist sentiments and stirring up diplomatic conflicts, which will end nobody knows how."

What is the significance of this new chauvinistic line in the policy of the counterrevolutionary autocracy? After Tsushima and Mukden, only people from under whose feet the ground is definitely slipping can venture on such a policy. Notwithstanding all the efforts that have been made, the experience of two years of reaction *has not created* any at all reliable support within the country for the Black-Hundred autocracy, nor any new class elements capable of rejuvenating the autocracy *economically*. And *without this*

no counterrevolutionary brutalities or frenzy can save the present political system in Russia.

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Stolypin, the Black-Hundred landlords, and the Octobrists all understand that without creating new class supports for themselves they cannot remain in power. Hence their policy of utterly ruining the peasants and forcibly breaking up the village communes in order to clear the way for capitalism in agriculture *at all costs*. The Russian liberals, the most learned, the most educated and the most "humane" of them—like the professors of the *Russkiye Vyedomosti*—prove to be incomparably more stupid in this respect than the Stolypins. "It would not be surprising," says the editorial in the February 1st issue of this newspaper, "if in deciding, for instance, the fate of the November provisional regulations, the quondam Slavophile village-commune advocates support the attempt of the Ministry to destroy the village communes by assigning land to individual householders as their private property.... It may even be assumed that the defensive aims common to the conservative majority in the Duma and to the Ministry will suggest to both measures even more aggressive than the celebrated ukases of 1906.... We get an amazing picture: the conservative government, with the support of representatives of the conservative parties, are preparing to carry out a radical reform of agrarian relations—which are the least amenable to drastic changes—and are deciding upon so radical a measure from abstract considerations regarding the preferability of one form of ownership to another."

Wake up, mister professor! Shake off the archive dust of old-fashioned Narodism; look at what has been done by two years of revolution. Stolypin vanquished you not only by physical force, but also by the fact that he correctly understood the most practical need of economic development, namely, the forcible breakup of the old form of landowner-

ship. The great "advance" which has already been irrevocably accomplished by the revolution consists in the fact that formerly the Black-Hundred autocracy *could* rely upon the support of medieval forms of landownership, but that now it is *compelled*—positively and irrevocably compelled—to work for their destruction with feverish speed. For it has understood that *without the breakup* of the old agrarian order *there can be no escape* from the contradiction which most profoundly of all explains the Russian revolution, i.e., the most backward system of landownership and the most ignorant peasantry on the one hand, and the most advanced industrial and finance capital on the other!

"So you are for the Stolypin agrarian legislation?" the Narodniks will ask us in horror.—Oh, no. Calm yourselves! We are unreservedly opposed to *all* the old forms of landownership in Russia—both manorial and peasant allotment. We are unreservedly in favour of a forcible breakup of this rotten and decaying antiquity which is poisoning everything new. We are in favour of the bourgeois *nationalization* of the land, as the only consistent slogan of the bourgeois revolution, and as the only practical measure that will direct the spearhead of the historically necessary breakup entirely against the landlords by helping the free owners on the land to single themselves out from among the mass of the peasantry.

The distinguishing feature of the Russian bourgeois revolution is the fact that a revolutionary policy on the main question of the revolution—the agrarian question—is being pursued by the Black Hundreds and by the peasants and workers. The liberal lawyers and professors, on the other hand, are advocating something that is absolutely lifeless, absurd and utopian—namely, a reconciliation of two antithetical and mutually-exclusive methods of *breaking up* what is obsolescent, and a reconciliation, moreover, which will mean no breakup at all. Either a victory for the peasant revolt and the complete breakup of the old landown-

ing system in favour of a peasantry that has been remoulded by the revolution—in other words, confiscation of the landed estates and a republic; or a Stolypin breakup which also remoulds—remoulds and adapts, in fact, the old land-owning system to capitalist relationships—but entirely in the interests of the landlords and at the price of the utter ruin of the peasant masses, their forcible ejection from the countryside, eviction, starvation, and the extermination of the flower of the peasant youth with the help of jails, exile, shooting and torture. For a minority to carry out such a policy against the majority would not be easy, but economically it is not impossible. We must help the people to realize this clearly. But the attempt by means of a neat little reform, peacefully and without violence, to escape from that utterly tangled skein of medieval contradictions which has been created by centuries of Russian history is the stupidest dream of an inveterate “man in the muffler.” Economic necessity will certainly call for, and will certainly bring about a most “drastic change” in Russia’s agrarian system. The historical question is whether it will be carried out by the landlords, led by the tsar and Stolypin, or by the peasant masses, led by the proletariat.

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“Union of the opposition”—such is the topic of discussion in the Russian political press today. Stolypin’s police-controlled *Rossiia* is jubilant: “Union?—that means that the Cadets too are revolutionaries! At the Cadets, at them!” The Cadet *Rech*, thoroughly imbued with the desire of the loyal government official to prove that the Constitutional-Democrats can be no less moderate than the Octobrists, mincingly purses its lips, pours forth a flood of “moral” disgust over the unscrupulous attempts to accuse it of being revolutionary, and declares: We, of course, would welcome the union of the opposition, but that union must

be a move "*from the left to the right*" (editorial of February 2). "We have had experience of political mistakes and disillusionments. When an opposition unites, it naturally unites on the minimum program of the most moderate of the parties which form it."

This program is perfectly clear: the hegemony of bourgeois liberalism—those are my terms, say the Cadets, just as Falloux in 1871 said to Thiers, when the latter appealed to him for support: The monarchy—those are my terms.

*Stolichnaya Pochta*<sup>25</sup> realized that it is shameful, disgraceful to say such things outright, and it therefore "does not agree" with the *Rech* and confines itself to vague hints at the "pre-October view" (the accursed censorship prevents a clear statement of political program!) and, virtually speaking, calls for a deal. The *Rech*, it as much as says, wants to lead and the revolutionaries want to lead (the new union), and what about me—don't I deserve a commission for acting as an honest broker?

"Union"—we heartily sympathize with that slogan, especially when a hint—although only a hint—is made at the "pre-October view." Only, history does not repeat itself, most amiable politicians! And no power on earth can obliterate from the minds of the various classes the lessons that were taught by the "history of the three years." Those lessons are extremely rich both in positive content (the forms, character and conditions of the victory of the *mass* struggle of the workers and peasants in 1905) and in negative content (the collapse of two Dumas, in other words, the collapse of constitutional illusions and Cadet hegemony).

Anybody who wants systematically to study, ponder over, understand and carry to the masses *these* lessons—let him do so by all means! We are all in favour of "union"—union for a relentless struggle against the renegades of the revolution. You don't like that? Well, then our paths diverge.

The old "pre-October" slogan ("Constituent Assembly") is a good one and (we hope that this will not rouse the ire of M-d-m of the *Nasha Mysl* symposium) we shall not discard it. But it is inadequate. It is too formal. It contains no recognition of the acute practical issues that life is raising. We shall supplement it with the great lesson of the three great years. Our "minimum program," the "program of our union," is simple and clear: 1) confiscation of the landed estates; 2) a republic. The *kind* of Constituent Assembly we need is one that can achieve this.

The history of the two Dumas, the Cadet Dumas, demonstrated with amazing clarity that the real struggle of social forces—the struggle which was not always a conscious one, which did not always break into the open, but which always exercised a decisive influence upon every big political issue and which always swept away like dust the conjuring tricks of the naive and knavishly astute "constitutionalist" ignoramuses—that struggle was waged completely and entirely on behalf of the two above-mentioned "objects." Not abstract theories, but the real experience of the struggle of our popular masses, under the real conditions of Russia's landowners' autocracy, has demonstrated to us in practice the inevitability of precisely these slogans. To those who are capable of grasping them we propose that we "march separately" and "strike jointly," strike at the enemy who is devastating Russia and killing off thousands of Russia's finest people.

"With such a program of union you will remain isolated." That is not true.

Read the speeches of the non-party peasants in the first two Dumas, and you will see that our program of unity only formulates their wishes, their needs and the elementarily necessary conclusions to be drawn from these needs. On those who do not understand these needs—from the Cadets to Peshekhonov (he too has preached

"unity" in Moscow, as we are informed from there)—we shall wage war in the name of "unity."

It will be a stubborn war. We knew how to work during the long years preceding the revolution. Not for nothing do they say we are as firm as a rock. The Social-Democrats have formed a proletarian party which will not lose heart at the failure of the first armed onslaught, will not lose its head, and will not be carried away by adventures. That party is marching towards Socialism, without binding itself or its future with the issue of any particular period of bourgeois revolutions. Precisely for that reason it is also free from the weak sides of bourgeois revolutions. And that proletarian party is marching to victory.

*Proletary*, No. 21,  
February 26 (13), 1908

V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*,  
Fourth Russian Edition,  
Vol. XIII, pp. 404-09



## **CERTAIN FEATURES OF THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF MARXISM**

Our teaching—said Engels, referring to himself and his famous friend—is not a dogma, but a guide to action. This classical statement stresses with remarkable force and expressiveness that aspect of Marxism which is very often lost sight of. And by losing sight of it, we turn Marxism into something one-sided, disfigured and lifeless; we deprive it of its living soul; we undermine its basic theoretical foundations—dialectics, the doctrine that historical development is all-embracing and full of contradictions; we sever its connection with the definite practical tasks of the epoch, which may change with every new turn of history.

And, indeed, in our time people are very frequently to be met with among those interested in the fate of Marxism in Russia who lose sight precisely of this aspect of Marxism. Yet, it must be clear to everybody that in recent years Russia has undergone changes so abrupt as to alter the situation with unusual rapidity and unusual force—the social and political situation, which in a most direct and immediate manner determines the conditions of action, and, hence, the aims of action. I am not referring, of course, to general and fundamental aims, which do not change with turns of history so long as the fundamental relations between classes do not change. It is perfectly obvious that this general trend of economic (and not only economic) evolution in Russia, like the fundamental relations between

the various classes of Russian society, has not changed during, say, the last six years.

But the aims of immediate and direct action have changed very sharply during this period, just as the concrete social and political situation has changed—and, *consequently*, in Marxism too, since it is a living doctrine, *various sides were bound* to come to the fore.

In order to make this thought clear, let us take a glance at the change that has taken place in the concrete social and political situation during the past six years. We at once discern two three-year periods into which this six-year period falls: one ending roughly with the summer of 1907, and the other with the summer of 1910. The first three-year period, regarded from the purely theoretical standpoint, is distinguished by rapid changes in the fundamental features of the state system in Russia; the course of these changes was very uneven and the amplitude of oscillations in both directions was very great. The social and economic basis of these changes in the “superstructure” was the action of *all* classes of Russian society in *the most diverse* fields (activity inside and outside the Duma, the press, unions, meetings, and so forth), so open and impressive and on such a mass scale as is not often to be observed in history.

The second three-year period, on the contrary, was distinguished—we repeat that we are here confining ourselves to the purely theoretical “sociological” standpoint—by an evolution so slow that it almost amounted to stagnation. There were no changes at all noticeable in the state system. There were no, or almost no, open and diversified actions by the *classes* in the majority of the “arenas” in which these actions were enacted in the preceding period.

The similarity between the two periods consisted in the fact that the evolution of Russia in both periods remained the same as before, capitalist evolution. The con-

tradiction between this economic evolution and the existence of a number of feudal, medieval institutions was not removed and also remained as before in consequence of the fact that the assumption of a partially bourgeois character by certain institutions could only aggravate rather than ameliorate this contradiction.

The difference between the two periods consisted in the fact that during the first of these periods the foreground of the historical arena was occupied by the question of exactly what form the result of the rapid and uneven changes aforementioned would take. The content of these changes was bound to be bourgeois owing to the capitalist character of the evolution of Russia; but there is a bourgeoisie and a bourgeoisie. The middle and big bourgeoisie, which professed a more or less moderate liberalism, was, owing to its very class position, afraid of abrupt changes and strove for the retention of large remnants of the old institutions both in the agrarian system and in the political "superstructure." The rural petty bourgeoisie, which is interwoven with the peasantry that lives by "the labour of its own hands," was bound to strive for bourgeois reforms *of a different kind*, reforms that would leave far less room for medieval survivals. The wage labourers, to the extent that they consciously realized what was going on around them, were bound to work out for themselves a definite attitude towards this clash of two distinct tendencies, both of which remained within the framework of the bourgeois system, but which determined entirely different forms for it, entirely different rates of its development, different degrees of its progressive influences.

In this way, the period of the past three years, not fortuitously but necessarily, brought to the forefront in Marxism those problems which are usually referred to as problems of tactics. Nothing is more erroneous than the opinion that the disputes and differences that arose over these questions were disputes among "intellectuals," that

they were "a struggle for influence over the immature proletariat," that they were an expression of the "adaptation of the intelligentsia to the proletariat," as the *Vekhi*-ists<sup>26</sup> of various kinds think. On the contrary, it was precisely because this class had reached maturity that it could not remain indifferent to the clash of the two different tendencies in the entire bourgeois development of Russia, and the ideologists of this class could not avoid providing theoretical formulations corresponding (directly or indirectly, in direct or reverse reflection) to these different tendencies.

In the second three-year period the clash between the different tendencies of bourgeois development in Russia was *not* on the order of the day, because *both* these tendencies were being crushed by the "diehards,"<sup>27</sup> forced back, driven inwards and, for the time being, smothered. The medieval diehards not only occupied the foreground but also inspired the broadest sections of bourgeois society with *Vekhi*-ist sentiments, with a spirit of despondency and recantation. It was not the collision between two methods of reforming the old order that appeared on the surface, but a loss of faith in reforms of all kinds, a spirit of "meekness" and "repentance," an infatuation for antisocial doctrines, a fad of mysticism, and so on.

And this astonishingly abrupt change was not fortuitous, nor was it the result of "external" pressure alone. The preceding period had so profoundly stirred up strata of the population who for generations and centuries had stood aloof from and were strangers to political questions, that "a revaluation of all values," a new study of fundamental problems, a new interest in theory, in elementals, in a study beginning with the rudiments, arose naturally and inevitably. The millions, suddenly awakened from their long sleep, and suddenly confronted with extremely important problems, could not remain on this level long, could not carry on without a respite, without a return to elemen-

tary questions, without a new training which would help them to "digest" lessons of unparalleled richness and make it possible for incomparably wider masses again to march forward, but now far more firmly, more consciously, more assuredly and more persistently.

The dialectics of historical development was such that in the first period it was the accomplishment of immediate reforms in every sphere of the country's life that was on the order of the day, while in the second period on the order of the day was the study of experience, its assimilation by wider strata, its penetration, if one may so express it, to the subsoil, to the backward ranks of the various classes.

It is precisely because Marxism is not a lifeless dogma, not a final, finished and ready-made, immutable doctrine, but a living guide to action that it was bound to reflect the astonishingly abrupt change in the conditions of social life. A reflection of the change was a profound disintegration and disunity, vacillations of all kinds, in a word, a very serious *internal* crisis of Marxism. The necessity of putting up a determined resistance to this disintegration, of waging a determined and persistent struggle on behalf of the *foundations* of Marxism again came up on the order of the day. In the preceding period, extremely wide sections of the classes that cannot avoid Marxism in formulating their aims had assimilated Marxism in an extremely one-sided and mutilated fashion, having learnt by rote certain "slogans," certain answers to tactical questions, *without having understood* the Marxist criteria of these answers. The "reevaluation of all values" in all the various spheres of social life led to a "revision" of the most abstract and general philosophical foundations of Marxism. The influence of bourgeois philosophy in its multifarious idealist shades found expression in the Machian epidemic that broke out among the Marxists.<sup>28</sup> The repetition of "slogans" learnt by rote but not understood and not thought

out led to the widespread prevalence of empty phrasemongering, which in practice amounted to absolutely un-Marxist, petty-bourgeois currents, such as frank or shame-faced "Otzovism,"<sup>29</sup> or the recognition of Otzovism as a "legitimate shade" of Marxism.

On the other hand, the spirit of *Vekhi*-ism, the spirit of recantation which had taken possession of very wide sections of the bourgeoisie, also penetrated the current which endeavours to confine Marxist theory and practice to "moderate and accurate" channels. All that remained Marxist here was the phraseology that served to clothe the arguments about "hierarchy," "hegemony" and so forth, which were thoroughly permeated with the spirit of liberalism.

It cannot, of course, be the purpose of this article to examine these arguments. A mere reference to them is sufficient to illustrate what has been said above regarding the profundity of the crisis through which Marxism is passing, regarding its connection with the whole social and economic situation in the present period. The questions raised by this crisis cannot be brushed aside. Nothing can be more pernicious or unprincipled than the attempts to dismiss them by phrasemongering. Nothing is more important than to rally *all* Marxists who have realized the profundity of the crisis and the necessity of combating it, for the purpose of defending the theoretical foundations of Marxism and its basic propositions, which are being distorted from diametrically opposite sides by the spread of the bourgeois influence to the various "fellow-travellers" of Marxism.

The preceding three years had awakened to a conscious participation in social life wide sections that in many cases are for the first time beginning to acquaint themselves with Marxism in a real way. In this connection the bourgeois press is creating far more fallacious ideas than ever before, and is disseminating them more widely. Under these circumstances

the disintegration in the ranks of the Marxists is particularly dangerous. Therefore, to understand the reasons for the inevitability of this disintegration at the present time and to close their ranks for the purpose of waging a consistent struggle against this disintegration is, in the most direct and precise meaning of the term, the task of the era for Marxists.

*Zvezda*, No. 2,  
January 5, 1911 (December 23, 1910)  
V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*,  
Fourth Russian Edition,  
Vol. XVII, pp. 20-24

## STOLYPIN AND THE REVOLUTION

The assassination of that hangman-in-chief, Stolypin, occurred at a time when a number of symptoms began to indicate that the first period in the history of the Russian counterrevolution is drawing to a close. That is why the event of September 1, quite insignificant in itself, again poses the extremely important question of the content and meaning of the counterrevolution in Russia. Amid the chorus of reactionaries who are servilely singing the praises of Stolypin, or are rummaging in the history of the intrigues of the Black-Hundred gang which is lording it over Russia, and amid the chorus of the liberals who are shaking their heads over the "wild and insane" shot (it goes without saying that included among the liberals are the former Social-Democrats of the *Dyelo Zhizni* who employed the hackneyed expression in the quotation marks), one discerns notes of a really serious and principled attitude. Attempts are being made to view "the Stolypin period" of Russian history as a definite whole.

Stolypin headed the government of counterrevolution for about five years, from 1906 to 1911. This was indeed a singular period crowded with instructive events. Outwardly, it may be described as the period of preparation for and accomplishment of the *coup d'état* of June 3, 1907. It was in the summer of 1906, when Stolypin addressed the First Duma in his capacity as Minister of the Interior, that preparations were begun for this coup, all the fruits of which are already seen now in all spheres of our



social life. The question is: What social forces supported the men who perpetrated the coup, or what forces prompted them? What was the social and economic content of the period that was ushered in on June 3? Stolypin's personal "career" provides instructive material and interesting illustrations bearing on this question.

A landlord and a marshal of the nobility, he was appointed governor in 1902, under Plehve,<sup>30</sup> gained "fame" in the eyes of the tsar and the reactionary court clique by his brutal reprisals against the peasants and the cruel punishment he meted out to them (in the Saratov Gubernia), organized Black-Hundred gangs and pogroms in 1905 (the pogrom in Balashov), became Minister of the Interior in 1906 and President of the Council of Ministers after the dispersal of the First State Duma. That, in very brief outline, is Stolypin's political biography. And this biography of the head of the counterrevolutionary government is at the same time the biography of the class which carried out the counterrevolution—Stolypin being nothing more than an agent or clerk in its employ. This class is the Russian landed nobility with Nicholas Romanov, the first nobleman and biggest landlord, at their head. This class is made up of the thirty thousand feudal landowners who control seventy million dessiatines of land in the European part of Russia—that is to say, as much land as is owned by ten million peasant households. The latifundia owned by this class form the basis of the feudal exploitation which, in various forms and under various names (labour rent, bondage, etc.) still reigns in the traditionally Russian central provinces. The "land hunger" of the Russian peasant (to use a favourite expression of the liberals and Narodniks) is nothing but the reverse side of the *surfeit of land* in the hands of this class. The agrarian question, which was the central issue in our Revolution of 1905, amounted to this: will landlordism remain? If it will, the poverty-stricken, wretched,

hungry, browbeaten and downtrodden peasantry, the bulk of the population, will *inevitably* remain for many, many years to come. Or, will the bulk of the population succeed in winning for themselves more or less human, free conditions of life, to some extent at least resembling those in Europe? This, however, *could not be accomplished* unless landlordism and the landlord monarchy inseparably bound up with it were abolished in a revolutionary way.

Stolypin's political biography is the faithful reflection and expression of the conditions of existence of the tsarist monarchy. In view of the situation that the revolution had created for the monarchy, Stolypin could not act otherwise than in the way he did. The monarchy *could not* act in any other way when it had become definitely clear, had become clear from actual practice both *prior* to the Duma, in 1905, and *during* the existence of the Duma, in 1906, that the vast, the overwhelming majority of the population had already realized that its interests could not be reconciled with the preservation of the landlord class and was striving to abolish that class. Nothing could be more superficial and more false than the assertions of the Cadet writers that the attacks upon the monarchy in our country were the expression of "intellectual" revolutionism. On the contrary, the objective conditions were such that it was the struggle of the peasants against landlordism that inevitably posed the question of whether our landlord monarchy was to live or die. Tsarism *was compelled* to wage a life and death struggle, it *was compelled* to seek other means of defence besides the utterly impotent bureaucracy and the army which had become enfeebled as a result of military defeat and internal disintegration. Naturally, all that the tsarist monarchy could do under the circumstances was to organize the Black-Hundred elements of the population and to perpetrate pogroms. The high moral indignation with which our liberals speak of the pogroms cannot but produce upon every revolutionary

an impression of something utterly wretched and cowardly, particularly in view of the fact that this high moral condemnation of pogroms turns out to be fully compatible with the idea of conducting negotiations and concluding agreements with the pogrom makers. The monarchy had to defend itself against the revolution; and the semi-Asiatic, feudal *Russian* monarchy of the Romanovs could not defend itself by any other but the most infamous, most disgusting, vile and cruel means: the only honourable way of combating the pogroms, the only rational way from the standpoint of a Socialist and a democrat, is not to express high moral condemnation, but to assist the revolution selflessly and in every way, to organize the revolution for the *overthrow* of such a monarchy.

The pogrom maker Stolypin trained himself for a ministerial post in the only way in which a tsarist governor could train himself for such a post—by torturing the peasants, by organizing pogroms and by showing an ability to conceal these Asiatic “practices” behind gloss and phrases, behind a pose and gestures in imitation of the “European.”

And the leaders of our liberal bourgeoisie, who are expressing their high moral condemnation of pogroms, conducted negotiations with the pogrom makers, recognizing not only the latter's right to existence, but their hegemony in the work of setting up a new Russia and of ruling it! The assassination of Stolypin had been the occasion for a number of interesting revelations and confessions concerning this question. Thus, for instance, Witte and Guchkov have published letters concerning the former's negotiations with “public figures” (read: with the leaders of the moderate liberal-monarchist bourgeoisie) about forming a Cabinet after October 17, 1905. Among those who took part in the negotiations with Witte—these negotiations must have lasted a long time, because Guchkov writes of “the wearisome days of protracted negotia-

tions"—were Shipov, Trubetskoy, Urusov and M. Stakhovich, i.e., the future leaders of the Cadets, *and* of the Party of "Peaceable Renovation,"<sup>31</sup> *and* of the Octobrist Party. The negotiations, it turns out, were broken off on account of Durnovo, whom the "liberals" refused to accept as Minister of the Interior, while Witte demanded this in the form of an ultimatum. Urusov, however, a leading light of the Cadet Party in the First Duma, "ardently supported Durnovo's candidacy." When Prince Obolensky suggested Stolypin for the post "some of those present supported the idea, others said that they did not know him." "I remember definitely," writes Guchkov, "that *no one raised* the objection of which Count Witte writes in his letter."

Now, the Cadet press, in its desire to emphasize its "democratism" (no joke!), particularly, perhaps, in connection with the elections in the first curia in St. Petersburg, where a Cadet opposed an Octobrist, is trying to castigate Guchkov for those negotiations. "How often it happened," writes the *Rech* in its issue of September 28, "that in order to please the powers that be, the Octobrist gentlemen, with Guchkov at their head, joined hands with Mr. Durnovo's colleagues! How often it happened that, with their gaze turned to the powers that be, they had their back turned on public opinion!" The same reproach levelled by the Cadets at the Octobrists is repeated in a number of variations in the leading article of the *Russkiye Vyedomosti* of the same date.

But pardon me, Messrs. Cadets, what right have *you* to reproach the Octobrists, seeing that *your* representatives also took part in these very same negotiations and even defended Durnovo? Were not *all* the Cadets at that time, in November 1905, like Urusov, in the position of people who have "their gaze turned to the powers that be" and their backs "turned on public opinion"? Yours is a "family quarrel," not a principled struggle but rivalry between

parties equally unprincipled—that is what we *have to say* apropos of the present reproaches levelled by the Cadets against the Octobrists in connection with the “negotiations” at the end of 1905. An altercation of this sort only serves to obscure the really important and historically undeniable fact that *all* shades of the liberal bourgeoisie, from the Octobrists to the Cadets, inclusive, have had “*their gaze turned to the powers that be*” and “*their backs turned*” on the *democracy* ever since our revolution assumed a really popular character, i.e., ever since it became a democratic revolution because of the democratic forces taking an active part in it. The Stolypin period of the Russian counter-revolution is characterized by this very fact, namely, that the liberal bourgeoisie has been turning its back on democracy, and that therefore Stolypin *could turn* for assistance, sympathy and advice now to one, now to another representative of this bourgeoisie. Were it not for this state of affairs, Stolypin would have been unable to exercise the hegemony of the Council of the United Nobility over the counterrevolutionary-minded bourgeoisie with the assistance, sympathy, and active or passive support of this bourgeoisie.

This aspect of the matter deserves special attention, because it is precisely this aspect that is lost sight of—or intentionally ignored—by our liberal press, as well as by such organs of a liberal labour policy as the *Dyelo Zluzni*. Stolypin was not merely a representative of the dictatorship of the feudal landlords; whoever confines himself to this characterization shows that he has understood nothing as regards the singularity and meaning of the “Stolypin period.” Stolypin was Minister during a period when counterrevolutionary sentiments prevailed among the *entire* liberal bourgeoisie, including the Cadets, when the feudal landlords *could*, and did, rely on these sentiments, when they *could*, and did, approach the leaders of this bourgeoisie with “offers” (of hand and heart), when they *could*

regard even the most "Left" of these leaders as "His Majesty's Opposition,"<sup>32</sup> when they *could*, and did, refer to the fact that the ideological leaders of the liberals had begun to incline to their side, to the side of reaction, to the side of those who fought the democracy and slung mud at it. Stolypin was Minister during the period when the feudal landlords, having abandoned all the romantic illusions and hopes concerning the "patriarchal" nature of the muzhik, and *seeking* allies among the new bourgeois elements in Russia in general and in rural Russia in particular, exerted all their efforts to carry through as speedily as possible a *bourgeois* policy in connection with peasant agrarian relationships. Stolypin tried to pour new wine into the old bottles, to remould the old autocracy into a bourgeois monarchy; and the failure of Stolypin's policy is the failure of tsarism on this last, *the last conceivable* road for tsarism. Alexander III's landlord monarchy tried to rely for support on the "patriarchal" countryside and on the "patriarchal elements" in Russian life in general; *that* policy was utterly smashed by the revolution. Nicholas II's landlord monarchy, after the revolution, tried to rely for support on the counterrevolutionary-minded bourgeoisie and on a bourgeois agrarian policy put into effect by these same landlords. The failure of these attempts, which even the Cadets, even the Octobrists can no longer doubt, is the failure of the *last policy possible* for tsarism.

Under Stolypin the dictatorship of the feudal landlord was not directed against the whole nation, including the entire "third estate," the entire bourgeoisie. No, that dictatorship was exercised under conditions most favourable for it when the Octobrist bourgeoisie served it heart and soul; when the landlords and the bourgeoisie had a representative body in which their bloc was guaranteed a majority and a formal opportunity was provided for conducting negotiations and arranging deals with the crown; when

Mr. Struve and the other *Vekhi*-ists reviled the revolution in a hysterical frenzy and propounded an ideology which gladdened the heart of Anthony, Bishop of Volhynia; when Mr. Milyukov proclaimed that the Cadet opposition was "His Majesty's Opposition" (his majesty the obsolete feudal lord). Nevertheless, despite these more favourable conditions for the Romanovs, despite all these most favourable conditions conceivable, considering the alignment of social forces in capitalist Russia of the twentieth century—despite all this, Stolypin's policy ended in failure. Stolypin was assassinated at a moment when a new gravedigger of the tsar's autocracy—or, rather, the gravedigger who is gathering new strength—is knocking at the door.

\* \* \*

Stolypin's attitude to the leaders of the bourgeoisie, and vice versa, is characterized most fully by the relations that existed during the period of the First Duma. "The period from May to July 1906 was decisive for Stolypin's career," writes the *Rech*. What was the centre of gravity during that period?

"The centre of gravity during that period," states the official organ of the Cadet Party, "was not, of course, the speeches in the Duma."

Truly a valuable admission, is it not? How many lances were broken at that time in tilts with the Cadets over the question as to whether the "speeches in the Duma" could be regarded as the "centre of gravity" during that period! What a torrent of angry abuse and supercilious doctrinaire lecturing was let loose in the Cadet press against the Social-Democrats who, in the spring and summer of 1906, maintained that the centre of gravity during that period was *not* the speeches in the Duma! How much the *Rech* and the *Duma* reproached the whole of Russian "society" at that time for cherishing dreams about a "Convention"

and failing to wax sufficiently enthusiastic over the Cadet triumphs in the "parliamentary" arena of the First Duma! Five years have passed since then; it is necessary to give a general appraisal of the period of the First Duma, and the Cadets proclaim quite nonchalantly, as if changing a pair of gloves, that "The centre of gravity during that period was not, of course, the speeches in the Duma."

Of course, not, gentlemen! But what, then, was the centre of gravity?

"Behind the scenes," we read in the *Rech*, "a sharp struggle was going on between the representatives of two trends. One recommended a policy of compromise with the people's representatives, not shrinking even before the formation of a 'Cadet Cabinet.' The other demanded sharp action, dissolution of the State Duma and reform of the election law. That was the program advocated by the Council of the United Nobility, which enjoyed the support of powerful influences." ... "At first Stolypin hesitated. There are indications that on two occasions, through Kryzhanovskiy, he made overtures to Muromtsev, proposing to discuss the possibility of forming a Cadet Cabinet with Stolypin as Minister of the Interior. But at the same time Stolypin undoubtedly maintained contact with the Council of the United Nobility."

That is how history is written by the educated, learned and well-read leaders of the liberals! So it appears that the "centre of gravity" was *not* speeches, *but* the struggle between two trends within the Black-Hundred tsarist court clique! Immediate "onslaught," without delays, was the policy of the Council of the United Nobility, i.e., not of individual persons, not of Nicholas Romanov, not of "one trend" in "*high quarters*," but of *a definite class*. The Cadets clearly and soberly see their rivals *on the Right*. But what was *to the Left* of the Cadets has disappeared from their field of vision. History was being made by the "high



quarters," the Council of the United Nobility and the Cadets; the common people, *of course*, took no part in the making of history! A definite class (the nobility) was opposed by the "People's Freedom" Party, which stands *above* classes, while the "high quarters" (i.e., the tsar little-father) hesitated.

Well, is it possible to imagine more selfish class blindness, a worse distortion of history and forgetfulness of the elementary truths of historical science, a more wretched muddle and worse confusion of class, party and individuals?

There is none so blind as he who *does not want* to see the democracy and its forces.

*Of course* the centre of gravity during the period of the First Duma was not the speeches in the Duma. It lay in the struggle between classes outside the Duma, in the struggle waged by the feudal landlords and *their* monarchy against the masses of the people, against the workers and peasants. It was precisely during that period that the revolutionary movement of the masses was again on the upgrade; the spring and summer of 1906 were marked by a formidable upsurge of strikes in general and of political strikes, of peasant riots and of mutinies in the armed forces. *That*, Messrs. Cadet historians, was *why* the "high quarters" hesitated: the struggle between the trends within the tsar's gang was over the question whether, considering the force of the revolution at the time, they should attempt the *coup d'état at once*, or whether they should *bide their time* and lead the bourgeoisie by the nose a little longer.

The First Duma fully convinced the landlords (Romanov, Stolypin and Co.) that there can be no peace between them and the peasant masses and the workers. This conviction of theirs was in accord with objective reality. All that remained for them to decide was a question of minor importance: when and how to change the election law—at

once or gradually? The bourgeoisie vacillated; but its entire behaviour, even that of the Cadet bourgeoisie, showed that it feared the revolution a hundred times more than it feared reaction. That was why the landlords deigned to invite the leaders of the bourgeoisie (Muromtsev, Heyden, Guchkov and Co.) to conferences at which they discussed the question of whether they might not *jointly* form a Cabinet. And the *entire* bourgeoisie, including the Cadets, conferred with the tsar, with the pogrom makers, with the leaders of the Black Hundreds about the means of combating the revolution; but since the end of 1905 the bourgeoisie has never sent representatives of a single one of its parties to confer with the leaders of the revolution about *how* to overthrow the autocracy and the monarchy.

That is the principal lesson to be learnt from the "Stolypin period" of Russian history. Tsarism conferred with the bourgeoisie when the revolution still seemed to be a force; but it applied its jackboot to kick out gradually *all* the leaders of the bourgeoisie—first Muromtsev and Milyukov, then Heyden and Lvov, and, finally, Guchkov—as soon as the revolutionary pressure from below relaxed. The difference between the Milyukovs, the Lvovs and the Guchkovs is absolutely immaterial—nothing but a matter of the sequence in which these leaders of the bourgeoisie turned their cheeks to receive the . . . "kisses" of Romanov-Purishkevich-Stolypin and the sequence in which they received these . . . "kisses."

Stolypin disappeared from the stage at the very moment when the Black-Hundred monarchy had taken all that it could usefully take from the whole of the counterrevolutionary-minded Russian bourgeoisie. Now this bourgeoisie—rejected, humiliated, and disgraced by its own renunciation of democracy, of the struggle of the masses, of the revolution—stands perplexed and bewildered on seeing the symptoms of the maturing of a new revolution. Stolypin helped the Russian people to learn a useful lesson: either

march to freedom by overthrowing the tsar's monarchy under the leadership of the proletariat; or sink deeper into slavery, submit to the Purishkeviches, Markovs and Tolmachovs, under the ideological and political leadership of the Milyukovs and Guchkovs.

*Sotsial-Demokrat*, No. 24,  
October 31 (18), 1911

V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*,  
Fourth Russian Edition,  
Vol. XVII, pp. 217-25

## ON LIQUIDATORISM AND THE GROUP OF LIQUIDATORS<sup>13</sup>

Whereas

1) for nearly four years already the R.S.D.L.P. has been waging a determined fight against the Liquidatorist trend, which was characterized at the Party conference in December 1908 as

“attempts on the part of a section of the Party intellectuals to liquidate the existing organization of the R.S.D.L.P. and to replace it at all costs, even at the price of downright renunciation of the Party’s program, tactics and traditions, by an amorphous association functioning legally”;

2) the Plenum of the Central Committee held in January 1910, continuing the fight against this trend, unanimously declared it to be a manifestation of bourgeois influence upon the proletariat and demanded as a condition for real Party unity and for the fusion of the former Bolshevik and Menshevik factions, a complete rupture with liquidatorism and the utter rout of this bourgeois deviation from Socialism;

3) in spite of all the Party’s decisions, and in spite of the obligation assumed by the representatives of all the factions at the Plenum of January 1910, a section of Social-Democrats, grouped around the journals *Nasha Zarya* and *Dyelo Zhizni*, has openly come out in defence of the trend which the entire Party has recognized to be a product of bourgeois influence upon the proletariat;

4) the former members of the Central Committee, M—l, Yuri and Roman, not only refused to join the Central Committee in the spring of 1910, but refused even to

attend a single meeting for the purpose of co-opting new members, and openly declared that they considered the very existence of the Central Committee of the Party "harmful";

5) it was precisely after the Plenum of 1910 that the above-mentioned principal publications of the Liquidators, the *Nasha Zarya* and *Dyelo Zhizni*, definitely turned to Liquidatorism along the whole line, not only "belittling" (contrary to the decisions of the Plenum) the "importance of the illegal Party," but renouncing it outright, declaring that the Party was "a corpse," declaring that the Party was already liquidated, declaring that the idea of reviving the illegal Party was "a reactionary utopia," heaping slander and abuse on the illegal Party in the columns of legally published journals, calling upon the workers to regard the nuclei of the Party and its hierarchy as "dead," etc.;

6) at a time when throughout Russia the members of the Party, irrespective of factions, united to promote the immediate task of convening a Party conference, the Liquidators, banded together in entirely independent coteries, split away from the local organizations, even where the pro-Party Mensheviks<sup>34</sup> predominated (Ekaterinoslav, Kiev) and definitely refused to maintain any Party relations with the local organizations of the R.S.D.L.P.,—

the conference declares that the group of the *Nasha Zarya* and *Dyelo Zhizni*, by its conduct, has *definitely placed itself outside the Party*.

The conference calls upon all Party members, irrespective of tendencies and shades of opinion, to combat Liquidatorism, explain its utter harmfulness for the cause of the emancipation of the working class, and bend all their efforts to revive and strengthen the illegal R.S.D.L.P.

Published in 1912 in the pamphlet:  
*The All-Russian Conference of the R.S.D.L.P.*

V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*,  
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# CONTROVERSIAL QUESTIONS

## AN OPEN PARTY AND THE MARXISTS

### I. THE DECISION OF 1908

To many workers the struggle that is now going on between the *Pravda*<sup>35</sup> and the *Luch* appears unnecessary and not very intelligible. Naturally, polemical articles in separate issues of the newspaper on separate, sometimes very special questions do not give a complete idea of the objects and content of the struggle. Hence the legitimate dissatisfaction of the workers.

Yet the question of Liquidatorism, over which the struggle is now being waged, is at the present time one of the most important and most urgent questions of the working-class movement. It is impossible to be a class-conscious worker unless one studies the question in detail, unless one forms a definite opinion on it. A worker who wishes independently to help to decide the destiny of *his* party will not waive aside polemics, even if they are not quite intelligible at first sight, but will earnestly seek and find the truth.

How is one to find the truth? How is one to make head or tail of the contradictory opinions and assertions?

Every sensible person understands that if a bitter struggle is raging on any subject, he must, in order to ascertain the truth, not confine himself to the statements made by the disputants, but examine the *facts* and *doc-*

*uments* for himself, see for himself whether there is any evidence of *witnesses* and whether that evidence is reliable.

This, of course, is not always easy to do. It is much "easier" to take for granted what comes to hand, what you *happen* to hear, what is more "openly" shouted about, and so on. But people who are satisfied with this are dubbed "shallow," shallow-brained people, and no one takes them seriously. It is impossible to get at the truth of any important question unless one undertakes a certain amount of *independent* work, and whoever is afraid of work deprives himself of the possibility of finding the truth.

Therefore, we appeal only to those workers who are not afraid of this work, who have decided to get to the bottom of the matter *themselves* and try to *discover facts, documents, evidence of witnesses*.

The first question that arises is—what is Liquidatorism? Where did this word come from, what does it mean?

The *Luch* says that the liquidation of the Party, i.e., the dissolution, the breakup of the Party, the renunciation of the Party, is merely a wicked invention. The "factionalist" Bolsheviks, it alleges, invented this charge against the Mensheviks!

The *Pravda* says that the whole Party has been condemning and fighting Liquidatorism for over four years.

Who is right? How is one to discover the truth?

Obviously, the only way to do it is to seek for facts and documents in the *history* of the Party of the last four years, from 1908 to 1912, when the Liquidators *finally seceded* from the Party.

It is precisely these four years, when the present Liquidators *were still* in the Party, that represent the most important period for the purpose of *tracing* the origin of the term Liquidatorism.

Hence, the first and basic conclusion: whoever talks of Liquidatorism, while *avoiding* the facts and documents of

the *Party* during the period 1908-11, is hiding the truth from the workers.

What are these facts and documents of the *Party*?

First of all the *Party decision* adopted in December 1908. If the workers do not wish to be treated like children who are stuffed with fairy tales and fables, they must ask their advisers, leaders or representatives, whether a *Party decision* was adopted on the question of Liquidatorism in December 1908 and what that decision was.

That decision contains a *condemnation* of Liquidatorism and the *explanation* of what it is.

Liquidatorism is the "attempts on the part of a section of the *Party* intellectuals to *liquidate*" (i.e., to dissolve, destroy, abolish, close down) "the existing organization of the *Party* and to replace it at all costs, even at the price of *downright renunciation of the Party's program, tactics and traditions*," (i.e., the past experience) "by an amorphous association functioning legally" (i.e., in conformity with the laws, existing "openly").

Such was the *Party's decision* on Liquidatorism, adopted more than four years ago.

It is obvious from this decision what the essence of Liquidatorism is and why it is condemned. Its essence is the *renunciation* of the "underground," its liquidation and *replacement* at all costs by an amorphous association functioning legally. Therefore, it is *not* legal work, not the insistence on its necessity that the *Party* condemns. The *Party* condemns—and unreservedly condemns—the *replacement* of the old *Party* by something amorphous, "open," something which cannot be called a party.

The *Party* cannot exist unless it defends its existence, unless it unreservedly fights those who want to liquidate, destroy it, who do not recognize it, who renounce it. This is self-evident.

He who renounces the existing *Party* in the name of some new one must be told: try, build up a new party, but



you cannot remain a member of the old, the present, the existing Party. Such is the meaning of the Party decision that was passed in December 1908, and it is obvious that no other decision could have been adopted on the question of the Party's existence.

Of course, Liquidatorism is ideologically *connected* with *renegacy, with the renunciation of the program and tactics, with opportunism*. This is exactly what is indicated in the concluding part of the above-quoted decision. But Liquidatorism is not *only* opportunism. The opportunists are leading the Party on to a wrong, bourgeois path, the path of a liberal labour policy, but they *do not renounce* the Party itself, they do not liquidate it. Liquidatorism is *that brand* of opportunism that goes to the length of *renouncing* the Party. It is self-evident that the Party cannot exist *if it includes* those who do not recognize its existence. It is equally understandable that the renunciation of the "underground" under the existing conditions is tantamount to the renunciation of the old Party.

The question is, what is the attitude of the Liquidators towards the decision adopted by the Party in 1908?

This is the crux of the matter, this puts the sincerity and political honesty of the Liquidators to the test.

Not one of them, unless he has taken leave of his senses, will deny that such a decision was adopted by the Party and has not been rescinded.

And so the Liquidators resort to evasions; they either avoid the question and *withhold* from the workers the Party's decision of 1908, or exclaim (often accompanied with abuse) that this decision was carried by the Bolsheviks.

But abuse only betrays the weakness of the Liquidators. *Party decisions* have been carried by the *Mensheviks*, for example, the decision concerning municipalization, which was passed in Stockholm in 1906.<sup>36</sup> This is common knowledge. Many Bolsheviks do not agree with that decision. But not one of them denies that it is a *Party decision*.

In exactly the same way the decision of 1908 concerning Liquidatorism is a *Party decision*. All subterfuges in regard to this question only signify a desire to mislead the workers.

Whoever wants to recognize the Party, not in words only, will not permit any subterfuges in this connection, and will insist on getting at the truth concerning the *Party's decision* on the question of Liquidatorism. This decision has been endorsed since 1909 by *all the pro-Party Mensheviks*, headed by Plekhanov who, in his *Dnevnik* and in a whole series of other Marxian publications, explained on many occasions and quite definitely that he who wants to liquidate the Party cannot be in the Party.

Plekhanov has been and will remain a Menshevik. Therefore the usual allusions of the Liquidators to the "Bolshevik" nature of the Party's decisions in 1908 are doubly wrong.

The more abuse the Liquidators hurl at Plekhanov in the *Luch* and the *Nasha Zarya*, the clearer is the proof that the Liquidators are in the wrong and that they are trying to obscure the truth by noise, shouting and brawling. Sometimes a novice is stunned by such methods, but the workers will find their bearings for all that, and will soon brush aside the abuse.

Is the unity of the workers necessary? It is.

Is the unity of the workers possible without the unity of the workers' organization? Obviously not.

What prevents the unity of the workers' party? Disputes over Liquidatorism.

Therefore, the workers must understand what these disputes are about in order that they *themselves* may decide the destiny of their Party and *save it*.

The first step in this direction is to read the *Party's first decision* on Liquidatorism. The workers must know this decision thoroughly and study it carefully, brushing aside all attempts to evade the question or to sidetrack it. Having

studied this decision, every worker will begin to understand the essence of the question of Liquidatorism, why this is such an important and such a "vexed" question, why it has been facing the Party during the four years and more of the period of reaction.

In the next article we shall consider another important Party decision on Liquidatorism which was adopted about three and a half years ago, and then pass on to facts and documents which define how the question stands at present.

## II. THE DECISION OF 1910

In our first article (*Pravda*, No. 289) we quoted the first and basic document with which those workers who wish to discover the truth in the present disputes must make themselves familiar, namely, the Party decision of December 1908 on the question of Liquidatorism.

Now we shall quote and examine another, no less important Party decision on the same question that was passed three and a half years ago, in January 1910.<sup>37</sup> This decision is especially important because it was carried *unanimously*: all the Bolsheviks, without exception, all the so-called *Vperyod*-ites,<sup>38</sup> and finally (this is most important of all) *all* the Mensheviks and the present Liquidators without exception, and also all the "national" (i.e., Jewish, Polish and Lettish) Marxists accepted this decision.

We quote here in full the most important passage in this decision:

"The historical situation of the Social-Democratic movement in the period of the bourgeois counterrevolution inevitably gives rise, as a manifestation of the bourgeois influence over the proletariat, on the one hand, to the renunciation of the illegal Social-Democratic Party, belittling of its role and importance, attempts to curtail the program and tactical tasks and slogans of consistent Social-Democracy, etc.; on the other hand, it gives rise to the renunciation of the Duma work of Social-Democracy and of the utilization of the legal pos-

sibilities, failure to understand the importance of both, inability to adapt consistent Social-Democratic tactics to the peculiar historical conditions of the present moment, etc.

"An integral part of Social-Democratic tactics under such conditions is the overcoming of both deviations by broadening and deepening Social-Democratic work in all spheres of the class struggle of the proletariat and by explaining the danger of such deviations."

This decision clearly shows that three and a half years ago all the Marxists, as represented by all the trends without exception, were obliged *unanimously* to recognize two *deviations* from the Marxian tactics. Both deviations were recognized as *dangerous*. Both deviations were explained as being due, not to accident, not to the evil intention of individual persons, but to the "*historical situation*" of the working-class movement in the given period.

Moreover, this unanimous Party decision points to the *class* origin and significance of these deviations. For Marxists do not confine themselves merely to bare references to disruption and disintegration. That disintegration, lack of faith, despondency, perplexity reign in the minds of many adherents of democracy and Socialism is obvious to all. It is not enough to admit this. It is necessary to understand the *class* origin of the discord and disintegration, to understand what *class* interests of the non-proletarian environment foster this "confusion" among the friends of the proletariat.

And the Party decision adopted three and a half years ago gave an answer to this important question: *the deviations* from Marxism are generated by the "bourgeois counterrevolution," they are generated by the "*bourgeois influence over the proletariat*."

What are these deviations that threaten to deliver the proletariat to the influence of the bourgeoisie? One of these deviations, which is connected with *Vperyod*-ism and which renounced the Duma work of the Social-Democrats as well as the utilization of the legal possibilities, *has disappeared*

*almost completely.* None of the Social-Democrats in Russia now preach these erroneous non-Marxian views. The *Vperyod*-ites (including Alexinsky and others) have begun to work in *Pravda* alongside the pro-Party Mensheviks.

The other *deviation* indicated in the decision of the Party is precisely *Liquidatorism*. This is obvious from the reference to the "renunciation" of the "underground" and to the "belittling" of its role and importance. Finally, we have a very precise document, published *three years* ago and refuted by no one, a document emanating from *all* the "national" Marxists and from Trotsky (better witnesses than whom the Liquidators could not produce): this document states directly that "in essence it would be desirable to call the tendency indicated in the resolution *Liquidatorism*, which *it is necessary to combat...*"

Thus, the fundamental, the most important fact that must be known by everyone who wants to understand what the present controversy is about is that: three and a half years ago the Party *unanimously* recognized *Liquidatorism* to be a "dangerous" deviation from Marxism, a deviation which it is necessary to combat, which expresses "*bourgeois influence over the proletariat.*"

The interests of the bourgeoisie, which is biased against democracy and which is, generally speaking, counterrevolutionary, demand the *liquidation*, dissolution of the old party of the proletariat. The bourgeoisie is doing everything to disseminate and foster all ideas directed towards the *liquidation* of the party of the working class. The bourgeoisie is striving to sow the seeds of renunciation of the old tasks, in order to "curtail" them, to cut and lop them off, to emasculate them, to substitute conciliation or an agreement with the Purishkeviches and Co. for the determined destruction of the foundations of their power.

Liquidatorism is, in fact, the introduction of these bourgeois ideas of renunciation and renegacy among the proletariat.

Such is the *class* significance of Liquidatorism as indicated in the *unanimous* Party decision adopted three and a half years ago. It is in this that the entire Party sees the greatest harmfulness and danger of Liquidatorism, its pernicious effect on the working-class movement, on the consolidation of an independent (in deeds and not in words) party of the working class

Liquidatorism means not only the liquidation (i.e., the dissolution, the destruction) of the old party of the working class, it also means the destruction of the *class independence* of the proletariat, the corruption of its class consciousness by *bourgeois* ideas.

We shall give an illustration of this appraisal of Liquidatorism in the next article, which will set forth in full the most important arguments of the Liquidatorist *Luch*. At present we will sum up briefly what we have stated. The attempts of the *Luch*-ites in general, and of Messrs. F. Dan and Potressov in particular, to make it appear that "Liquidatorism" is an invention are amazingly false subterfuges based on the assumption that the readers of the *Luch* are completely uninformed. Actually, apart from the Party decision of 1908, there is a *unanimous* Party decision of 1910, which gives a complete appraisal of Liquidatorism as a bourgeois deviation from the proletarian path, a deviation that is harmful and dangerous to the working class. Only the enemies of the working class can conceal or evade this Party appraisal.

### III. THE ATTITUDE OF THE LIQUIDATORS TO THE DECISIONS OF 1908 AND 1910

In the preceding article (*Pravda*, No. 95 [299]), we quoted the exact words of the unanimous Party decision on Liquidatorism, which define the latter as a manifestation of bourgeois influence over the proletariat.

As we have pointed out, this decision was adopted in *January 1910*. Let us now examine the behaviour of those Liquidators who brazenly assure us that there is not and never was such a thing as Liquidatorism.

In February 1910, in No. 2 of the *Nasha Zarya*, which had only just begun to appear at that time, Mr. Potressov wrote bluntly that "*there is no Party* in the shape of an integral and organized hierarchy" (i.e., ladder, or system of "institutions") and that it is impossible to liquidate "*what in reality no longer exists* as an organized body." (See the *Nasha Zarya*, 1910, No. 2, p. 61.)

This was stated a month or even less *after* the unanimous decision of the Party!

And in March 1910, another Liquidatorist journal, namely *Vozrozhdeniye*, having the same set of contributors, Potressov, Dan, Martynov, Yezhov, Martov, Levitsky and Co., stressed and popularly explained Mr. Potressov's words:

"There is nothing to liquidate and—we on our part" (i.e., the editors of the *Vozrozhdeniye*) "would add—the dream of re-establishing this hierarchy in its old, underground form is simply a harmful reactionary utopia which indicates the loss of political intuition by the representatives of a party which at one time was the most realistic of all." (*Vozrozhdeniye*, 1910, No. 5, p. 51.)

There is no party, and the idea of restoring it is a harmful utopia—these are clear and definite words. Here we have a plain and direct renunciation of the Party. The renunciation (and the invitation to the workers to renounce) came from people who deserted the underground and "dreamed" of an open party.

This desertion from the underground was, moreover, quite definitely and openly supported by P. B. Axelrod in 1912, both in the *Nevsky Golos* (1912, No. 6) and in the *Nasha Zarya* (1912, No. 6)..

"To talk about 'non-factionalism' amidst the present state of affairs," wrote P. B. Axelrod, "means behaving like an ostrich, means deceiving oneself and others." "Factional organization and consolida-

tion is the manifest duty and the most urgent task of the supporters of Party reform, or to be more exact, revolution."

Thus P. B. Axelrod is openly in favour of a *Party revolution*, i.e., the destruction of the old Party and the formation of a new one.

In 1913, the *Luch*, No. 101, in an unsigned editorial stated plainly that "among the workers in some places there is even a revival and strengthening of sympathy for the underground" and that this is "*a regrettable fact*." L. Sedov, the author of that article, admitted that the article "caused dissatisfaction" even among the supporters of the tactics of the *Luch*. (*Nasha Zarya*, 1913, No. 3, p. 49.) L. Sedov's explanations in this connection were such as to cause renewed dissatisfaction also on the part of a supporter of the *Luch*, namely An,<sup>39</sup> who in the *Luch*, No. 181, wrote opposing Sedov. An protests against Sedov's assumption that the "underground is an obstacle to the political organization of our movement, to the building up of a workers' Social-Democratic Party." An ridicules L. Sedov, who leaves one "in the dark" as to whether the underground is desirable or not.

The editors of the *Luch* published a long postscript to An's article in which they found An "to be in the wrong in his criticism of L. Sedov," and declared themselves *in favour of Sedov*.

We will examine the arguments of the editors of the *Luch* as well as the Liquidatorist mistakes of An himself in their proper place. This is not the point we are discussing here. Just now we must carefully appraise the fundamental and principal conclusion to be drawn from the documents we have quoted above.\*

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\* In the collection of articles *Marxism and Liquidatorism*, Lenin substituted for this paragraph, up to the word "fundamental," the following text (reproduced from the manuscript):

"In No. 8 of the *Zhivaya Zhizn* (July 19, 1913), V. Zassulich, repeating dozens of Liquidatorist arguments, wrote: 'It is difficult to say



The entire Party, both in 1908 and in 1910, condemned and rejected Liquidatorism, and clearly and in detail explained the class origin and the danger of this trend. All the Liquidatorist newspapers and journals—the *Vozrozhdeniye* (1909-10), the *Nasha Zarya* (1910-13), the *Nevsky Golos* (1912), and the *Luch* (1912-13)\*—all, after the most definite and even unanimous decisions have been adopted by the Party, reiterate thoughts and arguments that contain obvious Liquidatorism.

Even the supporters of the “*Luch*” are forced to declare that they disagree with these arguments, with this preaching. This is a fact. Therefore, to shout about the “baiting” of Liquidators, as Trotsky, Semkovsky and many other patronizers of Liquidatorism do, is downright dishonesty, for it is a crying distortion of the truth.

The truth proved by the documents I have quoted, which cover a period of more than five years (1908-13), is that the Liquidators, mocking at all the Party decisions, continue to abuse and bait the Party, i.e., the “underground.”

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whether the new organization (the S.-D. party) . . . helped or hindered the work.’ Clearly, these words are tantamount to the renunciation of the Party. V. Zassulich justifies flight from the Party by saying: the organizations were deserted ‘because at that time there was nothing to do in them.’ V. Z. is creating a purely anarchist theory about ‘a broad stratum’ instead of a party. See the detailed analysis of this theory in the *Prosveshcheniye*, No. 9, 1913. (See Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. XIX, pp. 354-74.—Ed.)

“What is the . . .”—Ed.

\* In the collection of articles *Marxism and Liquidatorism*, the *Novaya Rabochaya Gazeta* (1913-14) is added with the following footnote:

“See, for example, the *Novaya Rabochaya Gazeta*, No. 1, 1914. The new year leading article: ‘The Road to an Open Political Party of Action Is Also the Road to Party Unity’ (to the unity of the builders of the open party?). Or, No. 5, 1914: ‘surmounting (all the obstacles that are placed in the way of organizing labour conferences) is nothing more nor less than a most genuine struggle for right of association, i.e., for the legality of the working-class movement, closely connected with the struggle for the open existence of the Social-Democratic Labour Party.’”—Ed.

Every worker who wants seriously to examine the controversial and vexed questions *himself*, who wants to decide these questions for *himself*, must first of all assimilate this truth and take independent measures to investigate and verify the above-quoted decisions of the Party and the arguments of the Liquidators. Only those who carefully study, ponder over and independently solve the problems and *destiny* of their Party deserve to be called Party members and builders of the workers' party. It is impossible to treat with indifference the question of whether it is the Party that is "guilty" of "bailing" (i.e., of too trenchant and mistaken attacks on) the Liquidators or whether it is the Liquidators who are guilty of *flagrantly violating* Party decisions, of *persistently advocating the liquidation, i.e., the destruction*, of the Party.

It is obvious that the Party cannot exist unless it fights the destroyers of the Party with all its might.

Having cited the documents on this fundamental question, we shall, in the next article, pass on to the appraisal of the *ideological* content of the preaching of an "*open party*."

#### IV. THE CLASS MEANING OF LIQUIDATORISM

In the preceding articles (*Pravda*, Nos. 289, 299 and 314) we showed that all the Marxists, both in 1908 and in 1910, irrevocably condemned Liquidatorism as the renunciation of the past. The Marxists explained to the working class that Liquidatorism is the instilling of bourgeois influence into the proletariat. And *all* the Liquidatorist publications, from 1909 up to 1913, flagrantly violated and are still violating the decisions of the Marxists.

Let us consider the slogan, an "open labour party," or "a struggle for an open party," which the Liquidators are still advocating in the *Luch* and *Nashla Zarya*.

Is this a Marxian, proletarian slogan, or a liberal, bourgeois slogan?

The answer to this question must be sought not in the moods or the plans of the Liquidators or of other groups, but in an analysis of the relation of social forces in Russia in the present period. The meaning of slogans is determined not by the intentions of their authors, but by the relation of forces of *all* the classes in the country.

The feudal landowners and *their* "bureaucracy" are hostile to all changes in the direction of political liberty. This is understandable. The bourgeoisie, because of its economic position in a backward and semifeudal country, *cannot but* strive for freedom. But the bourgeoisie fears the activity of the people *more* than it fears reaction. The year 1905 demonstrated this truth with particular clarity; this truth was thoroughly understood by the working class; only the opportunist and semiliberal intellectuals failed to understand it.

The bourgeoisie is both liberal and counterrevolutionary. Hence its ridiculously impotent and wretched *reformism*. Dreams of reforms—and fear of settling accounts in real earnest with the feudal landowners, who not only refuse to grant reforms, but even take back those they have already granted. Preaching reforms—and fear of a popular movement. Striving to oust the feudal landowners—and fear of losing *their* support, fear of losing *their own* privileges. Upon this relation of classes is built up the June 3 system which gives full power to the feudal landowners and privileges to the bourgeoisie.

The class position of the proletariat makes it altogether impossible for it to "share" privileges or *be afraid* of anyone losing them. That is why selfishly narrow, miserable and dull-witted reformism is altogether alien to the proletariat. As to the peasant masses—on the one hand they are immeasurably oppressed, and instead of enjoying privileges suffer from starvation; on the other hand, they are undoubtedly petty-bourgeois—hence, they inevitably vacillate between the liberals and the workers.

Such is the objective situation.

From this situation it obviously follows that the slogan of an open labour party is, by its class origin, a slogan of the counterrevolutionary liberals. It contains nothing save reformism; it does not contain even a hint that the proletariat, the only class that is thoroughly democratic, is conscious of its task of fighting the liberals for influence over the whole of democracy; there is not even a suggestion of destroying the very foundation of all the privileges of the feudal landowners, the "bureaucracy," etc., not a thought of the general foundations of political liberty and of a democratic constitution; instead, this slogan implies the tacit renunciation of the old, and consequently, it implies renegacy and the dissolution (liquidation) of the workers' party.

In brief: this slogan carries into the midst of the workers in a period of counterrevolution the *preaching of the very thing* the liberal bourgeoisie is *practising* in its own midst. Therefore, had there been no Liquidators, the clever bourgeois progressives would *have had* to find, or hire, intellectuals to preach this to the working class!

Only brainless people can compare the *words* of the Liquidators with their *motives*. Their words must be compared with the *deeds* and the objective position of the liberal bourgeoisie.

Look at these *deeds*. In 1902, the bourgeoisie was *in favour* of the underground. It commissioned Struve to publish the underground *Osvobodivdeniye*. When the working-class movement led to October 17,<sup>40</sup> the liberals and the Cadets abandoned the underground, then repudiated it, and declared it to be unnecessary, folly, sinful and godless (*Vekhi*).<sup>\*</sup> *Instead of the underground, the liberal bourgeois-*

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\* In the collection of articles *Marxism and Liquidatorism*, *Vekhi* is omitted and the following footnote is given:

"There is a splendid book *Vekhi*, which has gone through numerous editions and contains an excellent compilation of these ideas of the counterrevolutionary bourgeoisie."—*Ed.*

sie advocated *a struggle for an open party*. This is a historical fact, confirmed by the incessant attempts at legalization made by the Cadets (1905-07) and the Progressives (1913).

Among the Cadets we see "open work and its secret organization"; the kindhearted, i.e., unconscious, Liquidator, A. Vlasov, has only retold the deeds of the Cadets "in his own words."

Why did the liberals renounce the underground and adopt the slogan of "a struggle for an open party"? Because Struve is a traitor? No, just the opposite. Struve went over to the other side because the entire bourgeoisie turned. And the latter turned: 1) because it obtained privileges on December 11, 1905, and even on June 3, 1907,<sup>41</sup> it was placed in the position of a *tolerated* opposition; 2) because it itself was mortally frightened by the popular movement. The slogan of "a struggle for an open party," translated from the language of "high politics" into plain and intelligible language, means the following:

"Messieurs Landlords! Don't imagine that we want to push you off the earth. No, just move up a little and make room for us bourgeois" (an open party)—"we shall then defend you five times more 'cleverly,' cunningly and 'scientifically' than the Timoshkins and Sabler's priests."<sup>42</sup>

Imitating the Cadets, the petty-bourgeois Narodniks took up the slogan of "a struggle for an open party." In August 1906, Messrs. Peshekhonov and Co. of the *Russkoye Bogatstvo* renounced the underground, proclaimed the "struggle for an open party," and cut out from their program the consistently democratic "underground" slogans.

As a result of these philistines' reformist chatter about a "broad and open party" they, as is obvious to all, were left *without* any party at all, *without any* contact with the masses, and the Cadets have even left off dreaming of having such contacts.

Only in this way, only by analyzing the position of the classes, by analyzing the general history of the counter-

revolution, is it possible to *understand* what Liquidatorism is. The Liquidators are petty-bourgeois intellectuals, sent by the bourgeoisie to sow liberal corruption among the workers, The Liquidators are traitors to Marxism and traitors to democracy. The slogan of "a struggle for an open party" in their case (as well as in the case of the liberals and the Narodniks) only serves to camouflage their renunciation of the past and their *rupture with the working class*. This is a fact that has been proved both by the elections in the workers' electoral colleges for the Fourth Duma and by the history of the origin of the *Pravda*, the workers' paper. It was obvious to all that contact with the masses was maintained only by those who had not renounced the past and knew how to make use of "open work" and of all and sundry "possibilities" exclusively in the spirit of *that* past, and for the sake of strengthening, consolidating and developing it.

During the period of the Third-of-June system it could not be otherwise.

About the "curtailment" of the program and tactics by the Liquidators (i.e., liberals), we will speak in our next article.

## V. THE SLOGAN OF "STRUGGLE FOR AN OPEN PARTY"

In the preceding article (*Pravda*, No. 122) we examined the objective meaning, i.e., the meaning that is determined by the relation of classes, of the slogan "an open party" or "a struggle for an open party." This slogan is a slavish repetition of the tactics of the bourgeoisie, for it correctly expresses its renunciation of the revolution, or its counter-revolutionary character.

Let us consider some of the attempts the Liquidators most frequently make to defend the slogan of "a struggle

for an open party." Mayevsky, Sedov, Dan and all the *Luchites* try to confuse the open *Party* with open work or *activity*. Such confusion is downright sophistry, a trick, deception of the reader.

In the first place, the open activity of the Social-Democrats during the period 1904-13 is a *fact*. Open party is a *phrase* of the intellectuals, which covers up renunciation of the Party. Secondly, the Party has repeatedly condemned Liquidatorism, i.e., the slogan of an open party. But the Party, far from condemning open activities, has, on the contrary, repeatedly condemned those who neglected or renounced them. In the third place, from 1904 to 1907, open activities were *especially* developed among *all* the Social-Democrats. But *not a single* trend, *not a single* faction of Social-Democracy at that time advanced the slogan "struggle for an open party"!

This is a historical fact. Those who wish to *understand* Liquidatorism must ponder over this fact.

Did the absence of the slogan "struggle for an open party" hamper open activities in 1904-07? Not in the least.

Why did no such slogan arise among the Social-Democrats *at that time*? Precisely because at that time there was no raging counterrevolution to draw a section of the Social-Democrats into extreme opportunism. It was only *too clear* at the time that the slogan "struggle for an open party" was an opportunist phrase, a renunciation of the "underground."

Gentlemen, try to grasp the meaning of this historical turn: during the 1905 period, when open activities were splendidly developed, there was *no* slogan of "struggle for an open party"; during the period of counterrevolution, when open activities are less developed, a section of the Social-Democrats (following the bourgeoisie) take up the slogan of renunciation of the "underground" and "struggle for an open party."

Is not the meaning and the class significance of such a turn clear yet?

Finally, the fourth and most important circumstance. *Two kinds* of open activity, in two diametrically opposite directions, are possible (and may be observed): one in defence of the old and entirely *in the spirit* of the old, *in the name* of the slogans and the tactics of the old; and another *against* the old, in the name of renunciation of the old, belittling the role and slogans of the old, etc.

The existence of these two kinds of open activity, hostile and irreconcilable in principle, is a most indisputable historical fact of the period from 1906 (the Cadets and Messrs. Peshekhonov and Co.) to 1913 (the *Luch*, the *Nasha Zarya*). Can one restrain a smile when one hears a simpleton (or one who for a while plays the simpleton) say: what is there to dispute about if both one and the other carry on open activities? The dispute, my dear sir, is precisely about whether these activities should be carried on in defence of the "underground" and its spirit, or in order to degrade it, against it and not in its spirit! The dispute is only—just "*only*"!—about whether the given open work is being conducted in the liberal or in the consistently democratic spirit. The dispute is "*only*" about whether it is possible to *confine* oneself to open work: remember Mr. Liberal Struve who did not confine himself to it in 1902, but wholly "*confined himself*" to it in the years 1906-13!

Our Liquidators of the *Luch* cannot possibly comprehend that the slogan "struggle for an open party" means carrying into the midst of the workers liberal (Struve-ite) ideas, tricked out in the rags of "near-Marxian" catchwords.

Or take, for instance, the arguments of the editors of the *Luch* themselves, in their reply to An (No. 181):

"The Social-Democratic Party is not limited to those few comrades whom the realities of life force to work underground. If the entire *Party* were limited to illegality, how many members would it have?



Two to three hundred? And where would those thousands if not tens of thousands of workers be, who are actually bearing the brunt of the entire Social-Democratic work?"

For a man who thinks, this argument alone suffices to identify its authors as liberals. First, they are telling a deliberate untruth about the "underground." It numbers far more than "hundreds." Secondly, all over the world the number of Party members is "*limited*," compared with the number of workers who carry on Social-Democratic work. For example, in Germany there are only one million members in the Social-Democratic Party, yet the number of votes cast for the Social-Democrats is about five million, and the proletariat numbers about fifteen million. The proportion of the number of Party members to the number of Social-Democrats is determined in the various countries by the differences in their historical conditions. In the third place, we have *nothing* that could replace our "underground." Thus, in *opposing* the Party, the *Luch* refers to the *non-Party* workers, or those who are *outside the Party*. This is the usual method of the liberal who tries to cut off the masses from their *class-conscious* vanguard. The *Luch* does not understand the relation between *Party* and *class*, just as the "Economists" of 1895-1901 failed to understand it. In the fourth place, our "Social-Democratic work" is genuine *Social-Democratic* work only in so far as it is conducted *in the spirit* of the old, under its slogans.

The arguments of the *Luch* are the arguments of liberal intellectuals, who, unwilling to join the actually existing Party organization, try to *destroy* that organization by inciting against it the non-Party, scattered, unenlightened mass. The German liberals do the same in alleging that the Social-Democrats do not represent the proletariat since their "Party" comprises "only" one-fifteenth of the proletariat!

Take the even more common argument advanced by the *Luch*: "We" are for an open party, "just as in Europe." The liberals and the Liquidators want a constitution and

an open party, "as in Europe" *today*, but they do not want the path by which Europe reached that today.

Kossovsky, a Liquidator and Bundist, teaches us in the *Luch* to follow the example of the Austrians. But he forgets that the Austrians have had a constitution *since 1867*, and that they could not have had it without: 1) the movement of 1848; 2) the profound political crisis of 1859-66, when the *weakness* of the working class allowed Bismarck and Co. to *extricate* themselves by means of the famous "revolution from above." What then is the conclusion to be drawn from the discourses of Kossovsky, Dan, Larin and all the *Luch*-ites?

Only that they are helping to solve our crisis in the spirit of "revolution" *necessarily* "from above"! But such work *is precisely* the "work" of a Stolypin Labour Party.

No matter where we look—we see the Liquidators renouncing both Marxism and democracy.

In the next article we shall examine in detail their arguments concerning the necessity of curtailing our Social-Democratic slogans.

## VI

We must now consider the curtailment of Marxian slogans by the Liquidators. For this purpose it would be best to take the decisions of their August conference, but for obvious reasons it is possible to analyze these decisions only in the press published abroad. Here we are obliged to quote the *Luch*, which, in the article by L. S., in its issue No. 108 (194), gave a remarkably precise exposition of the whole essence, the whole spirit of Liquidatorism.

Mr. L. S. writes as follows:

"The deputy Muranov so far recognizes only three partial demands, which, as is known, were the three pillars of the electoral platform of the Leninists: the complete democratization of the state system, an eight-hour day and the transfer of the land to the peasants. The *Pravda*, too, continues to maintain this point of view. Yet we, as well

as the whole of European Social-Democracy" (read—"we, and also Milyukov, who assures us that, thank God, we have a constitution"), "see in the advancing of partial demands a method of agitation which may be crowned with success only if it reckons with the everyday struggle of the working masses. We think that only that which, on the one hand, is of fundamental importance for the further development of the working-class movement, and on the other hand, may acquire urgency for the masses, should be advanced as the partial demand upon which at the present moment the Social-Democrats should concentrate their attention. Of the three demands advanced by the *Pravda*, only one—the eight-hour day—plays and can play a part in the everyday struggle of the workers. The other two demands may at the present moment serve as subjects for propaganda, but not for agitation. Concerning the difference between propaganda and agitation, see the brilliant pages of G. V. Plekhanov's pamphlet, *The Struggle Against Famine*." (L. S. has got into the wrong box; it is "painful" for him to recall Plekhanov's controversy in 1899-1902 with the "Economists" whom L. S. is copying!)

"Apart from the eight-hour day, the demand for the right of association, the right to form any kind of organization, with the corresponding right of assembly and speech, both oral and printed, is a partial demand advanced both by the requirements of the working-class movement and by the entire course of Russian life."

Here you have the tactics of the Liquidators. What L. S. describes by the words "complete democratization, etc.," and what he calls the "transfer of the land to the peasants" are *not*, you see, of "urgency for the masses," they are *not* advanced "by the requirements of the working-class movement" and "the entire course of Russian life"! How old these arguments are and how familiar they are to those who remember the *history* of Russian Marxian practice, its many years of struggle against the "Economists," who renounced the tasks of democracy! With what talent the *Luch* copies the views of Prokopovich and Kuskova, who *in those days* tried to entice the workers on to the liberal path!

But let us examine the arguments of the *Luch* more closely. From the point of view of common sense these arguments are sheer madness. Is it really possible for one

who has not taken leave of his senses to assert that the above-mentioned "peasant" demand (i.e., one that is to benefit the peasants) is *not* of "urgency for the masses," is *not* "advanced both by the requirements of the working-class movement and by the entire course of Russian life"? This is not only an untruth, it is a howling absurdity. The entire history of Russia in the nineteenth century, the entire "course of Russian life" *advanced* that question, *made* it urgent, nay, most urgent; this has been reflected in the *whole* of the legislation of Russia. How could the *Luch* arrive at such a monstrous untruth?

It had to arrive at it, because the *Luch* is in bondage to *liberal* policy and the liberals are true to themselves when they reject (or, like the *Luch*, put aside) the peasants' demand. The liberal bourgeoisie does so, because its *class* position forces it to humour the landlords and to oppose the people's movement.

The *Luch* brings to the workers the ideas of the liberal landlords and is guilty of treachery to the democratic peasantry.

Further. Can it be that only the right of association is of "urgency"? What about the inviolability of person? or the abolition of despotism and tyranny? or universal, etc., suffrage? or a single Chamber, etc.? Every literate worker, everyone who remembers the recent past, knows perfectly well that all this is urgent. In thousands of articles and speeches all the liberals acknowledge that all this is urgent. Why then did the *Luch* declare only one of these, albeit one of the most important, *liberties* to be urgent, while the fundamental conditions of political liberty, of democracy and of a constitutional regime were struck out, put aside, relegated to the archives of "propaganda," and excluded from agitation?

The reason, and the only reason, is that the *Luch* does not accept what is *unacceptable to the Liberals*.

From the standpoint of urgency for the masses, of the requirements of the working-class movement and of the course of Russian life, there is *no* difference between the three demands of Muranov and of the *Pravda* (or, to put it briefly, the demands of consistent Marxists). The demands of the workers and the demands of the peasants and the general political demands are all of *equal* urgency for the masses, they are all *equally* brought to the forefront both by the requirements of the working-class movement and "the entire course of Russian life." All three demands are also alike from the standpoint of the "partialness" dear to our worshipper of moderation and accuracy: they are "partial" compared with the final aims, but they are very high compared with, for example, "Europe" in general.

Why then does the *Luch* accept the eight-hour day and reject the rest? Why did it decide *for* the workers that the eight-hour day does "play a part" in their everyday struggle whereas the general political and peasant demands *do not* play such a part? Facts show, on the one hand, that the workers in their daily struggle advance general political as well as peasant demands—and, on the other hand, that they often *fight* for more moderate reductions of the working day.

What is the trouble, then?

The trouble lies in the reformism of the *Luch*, which, as usual, *attributes* its own liberal narrow-mindedness to the "masses," to the "course of history," etc.

Reformism, in general, means that people confine themselves to agitation for changes which do not require the removal of the main foundations of the old ruling class, changes that are *compatible* with the *preservation* of these foundations. The eight-hour day is compatible with the preservation of the power of capital. The Russian liberals, in order to attract the workers, are themselves prepared to endorse ("as far as possible") this demand. Those demands for which the *Luch* does not want to "agitate" are *incom-*

*patible* with the preservation of the foundations of the pre-capitalist period, the period of serfdom.

The *Luch* eliminates from agitation precisely that which is not acceptable to the liberals, who do not want to abolish the power of the landlords, but want only to share their power and privileges. The *Luch* eliminates precisely that which is incompatible with the point of view of reformism.

That's what the trouble is!

Neither Muranov, nor the *Pravda*, nor any Marxist rejects partial demands. That is nonsense. Take insurance, for example. We reject the *deception* of the people by idle talk about partial demands, by *reformism*. We reject *liberal reformism* in present-day Russia, for it is utopian, self-seeking and false, is based on constitutional illusions and full of the spirit of servility to the landlords. That is the point which the *Luch* tries to confuse and hide by phrases about "partial demands" in general, although it itself admits that neither Muranov nor the *Pravda* rejects certain "partial demands."

The *Luch* curtails the Marxian slogans, tries to fit them into the narrow, reformist, liberal measure, and thus carries bourgeois ideas into the ranks of the workers.

The struggle the Marxists are waging against the Liquidators is nothing but an expression of the struggle the advanced workers are waging against the liberal bourgeois for influence over the masses of the people, for their political enlightenment and education.

*Pravda*, Nos. 85, 95, 110, 122,  
124 and 126 of April 25 (12),  
May 9 (April 26), May 28 (15),  
June 11 (May 29), June 13 (May 31)  
and June 15 (2), 1913

V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*,  
Fourth Russian Edition,  
Vol. XIX, pp. 123-44

## DISRUPTION OF UNITY UNDER COVER OF OUTCRIES FOR UNITY

The questions concerning the present-day working-class movement are in many respects vexed questions, particularly for the representatives of the yesterday of this movement (i.e., of the stage which historically has just drawn to a close). This applies primarily to the questions of so-called factionalism, splits, and so forth. One often hears the intellectuals who participate in the working-class movement making nervous, feverish, almost hysterical appeals not to raise these vexed questions. Those who experienced the long years of struggle between the various trends among the Marxists since 1900-01, for example, may naturally think it superfluous to repeat many of the arguments on the subject of these vexed questions.

But not many are left today who took part in the fourteen years' conflict among the Marxists (not to speak of the eighteen or nineteen years' conflict counting from the appearance of the first symptoms of "Economism"). The vast majority of the workers now in the ranks of the Marxists either do not remember the old conflict, or have no knowledge of it at all. To the overwhelming majority (as, incidentally, was shown by the enquiry instituted by our magazine), these vexed questions are a matter of exceptionally great interest. We therefore intend to deal with these questions, which have been raised *as it were* anew (and for the younger generation of the workers they are really new) by Trotsky's "non-factional workers' magazine," *Borba*.

## I. "FACTIONALISM"

Trotsky calls his new magazine "non-factional." He puts this word in the top line in his advertisements; this word is stressed in every key in the editorial articles in the *Borba* itself, as well as in the Liquidatorist *Severnaya Rabochaya Gazeta*, where an article by Trotsky on the *Borba* was published before that magazine appeared.

What, then, is this "non-factionalism"?

Trotsky's "workers' magazine" is Trotsky's magazine *for* workers, for it bears no trace either of workers' initiative in founding it, or of connection with working-class organizations. Desiring to write in a popular style, Trotsky, in his workers' magazine, explains for the benefit of his readers the meaning of such words as "territory," "factor," and so forth.

This is very good. But why not also explain to the workers the meaning of the word "non-factionalism"? Is that word *more* intelligible than the words "territory" and "factor"?

No, that is not the reason. The reason is that by means of the label "non-factionalism," the worst representatives of the worst remnants of factionalism *are deceiving* the younger generation of workers. It is worth while devoting a little time to explaining this.

Factionalism was the main distinguishing feature of the Social-Democratic Party in a definite historical period. Which period? From 1903 to 1911.

To explain the nature of this factionalism more clearly we must recall the concrete conditions that existed in, say, 1906-07. At that time, the Party was united, there was no split, but factionalism existed, i.e., in the united Party there were *in fact two* factions, two actually separate organizations. The local workers' organizations were united, but on every important issue the two factions drew up two sets of tactics. The advocates of the respective tactics disputed



among themselves in the united workers' organizations (as was the case, for example, during the discussion of the slogan: a Duma, or Cadet, Cabinet, in 1906, or during the elections of delegates for the London Congress in 1907), and questions were decided *by a majority vote*. One faction was defeated at the Stockholm Unity Congress (1906), the other was defeated at the London Unity Congress (1907).

These are commonly known facts in the history of organized Marxism in Russia.

It is sufficient to remember these commonly known facts to realize what glaring falsehoods Trotsky is spreading.

Since 1912, for over two years, there has been *no* factionalism among the organized Marxists in Russia, no controversies over tactics in *united* organizations, at *united conferences* and congresses. There is a *complete* breach between the Party, which in January 1912 formally announced that the Liquidators *do not* belong to it, and the Liquidators. Trotsky often calls this state of affairs a "split," and with this appellation we will deal separately later on. But it remains an undoubted fact that the term "factionalism" is *misleading*.

As we have said already, this term is a repetition, an uncritical, senseless, meaningless repetition of *what was true yesterday*, i.e., in a period that has already passed. When Trotsky talks to us about the "chaos of factional strife" (see No. 1, pp. 5, 6, and many others) we realize at once *which* period of the past his words echo.

Examine the present state of affairs from the viewpoint of the young Russian workers who now constitute nine-tenths of the organized Marxists in Russia. They see *three* mass expressions of the different views, or trends of the working-class movement: the "*Pravda*-ists" gathered around a newspaper with a circulation of 40,000, the "Liquidators" (15,000 circulation) and Left Narodniks (10,000 circulation). The circulation figures reveal to the reader the *mass* character of a certain tenet.

The question is, what has "chaos" to do with the subject? Trotsky is fond of sonorous and empty catch phrases, everybody knows that, but the catchword "chaos" is *not only* a catchword, *in addition*, it signifies the transplanting (or rather, a vain attempt to transplant) to Russian soil, in the present period, the relations that existed *abroad* in a *bygone* period. This is the whole point.

There is no "chaos" whatever in the struggle between the Marxists and the Narodniks. It is to be hoped that *even* Trotsky will not dare to assert that there is. The struggle between the Marxists and the Narodniks has been going on for over thirty years, ever since Marxism came into being. The cause of this struggle is the radical divergence of interests and viewpoints of two different classes, the proletariat and the peasantry. If there is any "chaos" anywhere, it is only in the heads of cranks who fail to understand this.

What, then, remains? "Chaos" in the struggle between the Marxists and the Liquidators? This, too, is wrong, for a struggle against a *trend* which the entire Party recognized as a trend and condemned as far back as 1908, cannot be called chaos. And everybody who has the least regard for the history of Marxism in Russia knows that Liquidatorism is most closely and inseverably connected, even as regards its leaders and supporters, with "Menshevism" (1903-08) and "Economism" (1894-1903). Hence, here, too, we have a history extending over nearly twenty years. Anybody who regards the history of his own Party as "chaos" shows that he is an utter numbskull.

But let us examine the present situation *from the point of view* of Paris, or Vienna. At once the whole scene changes. *In addition* to the "Pravda-ists" and "Liquidators," we see *no less than five Russian* "factions," i.e., separate groups which claim membership of one and the same Social-Democratic Party: Trotsky's group, two *Vperyod* groups, the "pro-Party Bolsheviks"<sup>43</sup> and the "pro-Party Mensheviks." All Marxists in Paris and in Vienna (for the purpose of illus-

tration I take two particularly large centres) are perfectly well aware of this.

Here Trotsky is right in a certain sense; this is indeed factionalism, this is indeed chaos!

"Factionalism," i.e., nominal unity (all *claim* that they belong to one Party) and actual disunity (for, in fact, all the groups are independent and enter into negotiations and agreements with each other as sovereign powers).

"Chaos," i.e., the absence of (1) objective and verifiable proof that these factions have connections with the working-class movement in Russia and (2) absence of any data to enable us to judge the actual ideological and political physiognomy of these factions. Take a period of two full years—1912 and 1913. As everybody knows, this was a period of revival and upswing of the working-class movement, when every trend or tendency which bore anything of a *mass* character (and in politics this mass character alone counts) *could not help* exercising some influence in the Fourth Duma elections, in the strike movement, in the legal newspapers, in the trade unions, in the insurance election campaign, and so forth. Throughout these two years not a single one of these five factions abroad asserted itself in the slightest degree *in any* of the activities of the mass working-class movement in Russia just enumerated!

This is a fact that anybody can easily verify.

And this fact proves that we are right when we say that Trotsky is a representative of the "worst remnants of factionalism."

Although he claims to be non-factional, Trotsky is known to everybody who is in the least familiar with the working-class movement in Russia as the representative of "Trotsky's *faction*." Here there is factionalism, for we see the two essential symptoms of it: (1) nominal recognition of unity and (2) group segregation in fact. Here there are remnants of factionalism, for there is no evidence whatever of any real connection with the mass working-class movement in Russia.

And lastly, it is the worst form of factionalism, for there is *no* ideological and political definiteness. It cannot be denied that both the *Pravda*-ists (even our determined opponent L. Martov admits that we stand "solid and disciplined" around universally-known formal decisions on all questions) and the Liquidators (they, or at all events the most prominent of them, have very definite features, namely liberal and not Marxian) possess this definiteness.

It cannot be denied that some of the factions which, like Trotsky's faction, exist exclusively from the Vienna-Paris, but by no means from the Russian point of view, possess a certain amount of definiteness. For example, the *Machite* theories of the Machite *Vperyod* group are definite; the emphatic repudiation of these theories and defence of Marxism, in addition to the theoretical condemnation of Liquidatorism by the "pro-Party Mensheviks," is definite.

Trotsky, however, possesses no ideological and political definiteness, for his patent for "non-factionalism" is merely (as we shall soon see in greater detail) a patent to *flit* freely to and fro, from one faction to another.

To sum up:

1) Trotsky does not explain, nor does he understand, the historical significance of the *ideological* disagreements among the various Marxian trends and factions, although these disagreements run through the twenty years' history of Social-Democracy and concern the fundamental questions of the present day (as we shall show later on);

2) Trotsky fails to understand that the main specific features of *factionalism* are nominal recognition of unity and actual disunity;

3) Under cover of "non-factionalism," Trotsky is championing the interests of one of the factions abroad which particularly lack definite principles and have no basis in the working-class movement in Russia.

All that glitters is not gold. There is much glitter and sound in Trotsky's phrases, but they are meaningless.

## II. THE SPLIT

. We are told: "Although there is no factionalism, i.e., nominal recognition of unity, but actual disunity, among you, *Pravda*-ists, there is something worse, namely, schismatism." This is exactly what is said by Trotsky who, unable to think out his ideas or to put any logic into his phrases, raises a howl against factionalism at one moment, and at another moment shouts: "schismatism is winning one suicidal victory after another" (No. 1, p. 6).

This statement can have only one meaning: "The '*Pravda*'-ists are winning one victory after another" (this is an objective, verifiable fact, established by a study of the mass working-class movement in Russia during, say, 1912 and 1913), *but I, Trotsky*, denounce the *Pravda*-ists (1) as schismatists, and (2) as suicidal politicians.

Let us examine this.

First of all we will express our thanks to Trotsky: Not long ago (from August 1912 to February 1914) he was at one with F. Dan, who, as is well known, threatened to "*kill*" anti-Liquidatorism, and called upon others to do so. At present, Trotsky does not threaten to "*kill*" our trend (and our Party—don't be angry, Citizen Trotsky, this is true!), he only prophesies that it will kill *itself*!

This is much milder, isn't it? It is almost "non-factional," isn't it?

But joking aside (although joking is the only way of retorting mildly to Trotsky's intolerable phrasemongering).

"Suicide" is a mere catch phrase, an empty phrase, mere "Trotskyism."

Schismatism is a serious political accusation. This accusation is repeated against us in a thousand keys by the Liquidators and by all the above enumerated, actually existing—from the viewpoint of Paris and Vienna—groups.

And all of them repeat this serious political accusation in an amazingly frivolous way. Look at Trotsky. He admit-

ted that "schismatism is winning (read: the *Pravda*-ists are winning) one suicidal victory after another." And to this he adds:

*"Numerous advanced workers, in a state of utter political bewilderment, themselves often become active agents of a split" (No. 1, p. 6).*

Is it possible to find a more glaring example of irresponsibility on this question than that revealed by these words?

You accuse us of being schismatists when the only thing that confronts us in the arena of the working-class movement in Russia is Liquidatorism. So you think that our attitude towards Liquidatorism is wrong? And indeed, *all* the groups abroad that we enumerated above, no matter how much they may differ from each other, are agreed that our attitude towards Liquidatorism is wrong, that it is "schismatic." This, too, reveals the similarity (and fairly close political kinship) between *all* these groups and the Liquidators.

If our attitude towards Liquidatorism is wrong in theory, in principle, then Trotsky should say so *straightforwardly*, and state *definitely*, without equivocation, why he thinks it is wrong. But Trotsky has been evading this extremely important point *for years*.

If our attitude towards Liquidatorism has been proved wrong in practice, by the experience of the movement, then this experience should be analyzed; but Trotsky fails to do this, too. "Numerous advanced workers," he admits, "become *active agents of a split*" (read: active agents of the *Pravda*-ist line, tactics, system and organization).

What is the cause of the deplorable fact, which, as Trotsky admits, is confirmed by experience, that the *advanced* workers, and *numerous* advanced workers at that, stand for *Pravda*?

The "utter political bewilderment" of these advanced workers, answers Trotsky.

Needless to say, this explanation is extremely flattering to Trotsky, to all five factions abroad, and to the Liquidators. Trotsky is very fond of giving, "with a learned air of an expert," in pompous and sonorous terms, explanations of historical phenomena that are flattering to Trotsky. Since "numerous advanced workers" become "active agents" of a political and Party line which does not harmonize with Trotsky's line, Trotsky settles the question unhesitatingly, straight off the bat: these advanced workers are "in a state of utter political bewilderment," while he, Trotsky, is evidently "in a state of" political firmness and clarity, and keeps to the right line! . . . And this very same Trotsky, beating his breast, denounces factionalism, coterie methods, and the efforts of intellectuals to impose their will on the workers! . . .

Reading things like these, one involuntarily asks oneself: Is it from a lunatic asylum that these voices come?

The Party submitted the question of Liquidatorism, and of condemning it, to the "advanced workers" as far back as 1908, and the question of "splitting" from a very definite group of Liquidators (namely, the *Nasha Zarya* group), i.e., that the only way to build up the Party was *without* this group and in opposition to it—this question it submitted in January 1912, over two years ago. The overwhelming majority of the advanced workers expressed themselves in *favour* of supporting the "January (1912) line." Trotsky himself admits this fact when he talks about "victories" and about "numerous advanced workers." But Trotsky wriggles out of this simply by hurling *abuse* at these advanced workers and calling them "schismatists" and "politically bewildered"!

Sane people will draw a different conclusion from these facts. Where the *majority* of the class-conscious workers have rallied around precise and definite decisions there is *unity* of opinion and action, there is the Party spirit, and the Party.

Where we see Liquidators who have been "dismissed from their posts" by the workers, or a half a dozen émigré groups who for two years have produced *no proof whatever* that they are connected with the mass working-class movement in Russia, there, indeed, bewilderment and *schism* reigns. In trying, now, to persuade the workers *not to carry out the decisions* of that "body" which the Marxist *Pravda*ists recognize, Trotsky is *trying* to disorganize the movement and to cause a split.

These efforts are vain, but we must expose the arrogantly conceited leaders of coteries of intellectuals who, while causing splits, are shouting about others causing splits, who, after suffering *utter defeat* at the hands of the "advanced workers" for the past two years or more, are with incredible insolence *spurning* the decisions and the will of these advanced workers and saying that *they* are "politically bewildered." These are precisely the methods of Nozdryov, or of Judas Golovlyov.<sup>44</sup>

In reply to these repeated outcries about a split, we, fulfilling our duty as a publicist, will not tire of repeating *precise*, unrefuted and irrefutable figures. During the Second Duma elections, 47 per cent of the deputies elected by the workers' curia were Bolsheviks, in the Third Duma elections 50 per cent were Bolsheviks, and in the Fourth Duma elections 67 per cent.

This is where the majority of the "advanced workers" are. This is where the Party is. This is where unity of opinion and action of the majority of the class-conscious workers prevails.

In reply to this the Liquidators say (see Bulkin, L. M., in issue No. 3 of *Nasha Zarya*) that we base our arguments on Stolypin curiae. This is a foolish and unscrupulous objection. The Germans measure their election successes under the Bismarck franchise law, which excludes women. Only people bereft of their senses would reproach the German Marxists for measuring their successes under *the existing*



franchise law, without in the least justifying its reactionary restrictions.

And we, too, without justifying curiae, or the curia system, measured our successes under *the existing* franchise law. There were curiae in all three (Second, Third and Fourth) Duma elections, and *within* the workers' curia, *within* the ranks of Social-Democracy, there was a *complete* swing against the Liquidators. Those who do not wish to deceive themselves and others must admit this objective fact of the victory of *working-class unity* over the Liquidators.

The other objection is no less "clever": "Mensheviks and Liquidators voted for (or took part in the election of) such-and-such a Bolshevik." Splendid! But does not the same thing apply to the 53 per cent *non-Bolshevik* deputies who were elected to the Second Duma, to the 50 per cent elected to the Third Duma, and to the 33 per cent elected to the Fourth Duma?

If, instead of the figures of the deputies elected, we could obtain the figures of the electors, or workers' delegates, etc., we would gladly quote them. But such more detailed figures are *not* available, and consequently the "objectors" are simply throwing dust in the eyes of the public.

But what about the figures of the workers' groups which assisted the newspapers of the different trends? During *two* years (1912 and 1913), 2,801 groups assisted the *Pravda*, and 750 assisted the *Luch*.\* Anybody can verify these figures, and nobody has attempted to disprove them.

Where is the *unity of action and will of the majority* of the "advanced workers," and where is the *thwarting* of the will of the majority?

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\* A preliminary calculation made up to April 1, 1914, showed 4,000 groups for *Pravda* (commencing from January 1, 1912) and 1,000 for the Liquidators and all their allies put together.

Trotsky's "non-factionalism" is, in fact, schism, in that it most unblushingly thwarts the will of the majority of the workers.

### III. THE COLLAPSE OF THE AUGUST BLOC

But there is still another method, and a very important one, of verifying the correctness and truthfulness of Trotsky's accusation of schismatism.

You are of the opinion that it is the "Leninists" who are schismatists? Very well, let us assume that you are right.

But if you are right, why have not all the other factions and groups proved that unity is possible with the Liquidators *without* the "Leninists," and *against* the "schismatists"?... If we are schismatists, why have not you uniters, united among yourselves, and with the Liquidators? Had you done that you would have proved to the workers *by deeds* that unity is possible and beneficial!...

Let us go over the chronology of events.

In January 1912, the "Leninist" "schismatists" declared that they were a Party *without* and *against* the Liquidators.

In March 1912, *all* the groups and "factions": Liquidators, Trotskyites, *Vperyod*-ites, "pro-Party Bolsheviks" and "pro-Party Mensheviks," in their Russian news sheets and in the columns of the German Social-Democratic newspaper *Vorwärts*, *united* against these "schismatists." All of them unanimously, in chorus, in unison and in one voice vilified us and called us "usurpers," "mystifiers," and other no less tender and endearing names.

Very well, gentlemen! But what would have been easier than for you to unite *against* the "usurpers" and to set the "advanced workers" an example of *unity*? Would not the advanced workers, had they seen the unity of all against the usurpers, united Liquidators and *non-*

Liquidators on one side, and *isolated* "usurpers," "schismatists," and so forth, on the other, have supported the former??

If disagreements are only imagined, or inflated, and so forth, by the "Leninists," and if unity between the Liquidators, Plekhanovites, *Vperyod*-ites, Trotskyites, and so forth, is indeed *possible*, why have you not proved this during the past two years by *your own* example?

In August 1912, a conference of "uniters" was convened. At once *disunity* broke out: the Plekhanovites refused to attend at all; the *Vperyod*-ites attended, but entered a protest and withdrew and then exposed the utterly fictitious character of the whole business.

The Liquidators, the Letts, the Trotskyites (Trotsky and Semkovsky), the Caucasians,<sup>45</sup> and the seven<sup>46</sup> "united." But did they really unite? We stated at the time that they did not, that this was merely a screen to cover up Liquidatorism. Have events disproved our statement?

Exactly eighteen months later, in February 1914, we found:

1. That the group of seven was breaking up. Buryanov had left them.

2. That in the remaining, new, "six," Chkheidze and Tulyakov, or somebody else, could not see eye to eye on the reply to be made to Plekhanov. They stated in the press that they would reply to him, *but they could not*.

3. That Trotsky, who for many months had practically vanished from the columns of the *Luch*, had *split off*, and had started "his own" journal, *Borba*. By calling this journal "non-factional," Trotsky clearly (clearly for those who are at all familiar with the subject) said that in his, Trotsky's opinion, *Nasha Zarya* and the *Luch* had proved to be "factional," i.e., bad uniters.

If you are a uniter, my dear Trotsky, if you say that it is possible to unite with the Liquidators, if you and they stand by the "fundamental ideas formulated in August 1912"

(*Borba*, No. 1, p. 6, "Editorial note"), why did *you yourself* not unite with the Liquidators in *Nasha Zarya* and the *Luch*?

When, before Trotsky's journal appeared, the *Severnaya Rabochaya Gazeta* published a vicious comment stating that the physiognomy of this journal was "unclear" and that there had been "rather a lot of talk in Marxist circles" about this journal, *Put Pravdy* (No. 37)\* was naturally obliged to expose this falsehood. It said: "there was talk in Marxist circles" about a secret memorandum written by Trotsky *against* the *Luch*-ites; Trotsky's physiognomy and his splitting off from the August bloc were perfectly "clear."

4. An, the well-known leader of the Caucasian Liquidators who had attacked L. Sedov (for which he received a public dressing down from F. Dan and Co.), now appeared in the *Borba*. It remains "unclear" whether the Caucasians now desire to go with Trotsky or with Dan.

5. The Lettish Marxists, who constituted the only *real* organization in the "August bloc," had *formally* withdrawn from it, stating (in 1914) in the resolution of their last Congress that

*"the attempt on the part of the conciliators to unite at all costs with the Liquidators (the August Conference, 1912) proved fruitless, and the uniters themselves became ideologically and politically dependent on the Liquidators."*

This was stated after eighteen months' experience by an organization which had itself been *neutral* and had not desired to establish connection with *either* of the two centres. This decision of *neutral* people should be all the more weighty for Trotsky!

Enough, is it not?

The people who accused us of being schismatists, of being unable, or unwilling, to live in harmony with the Liquidators—

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\* See Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. XX, pp. 140-42.—Ed.

tors, were *themselves* unable to live in harmony with them. The August bloc proved to be a fiction and collapsed.

• By concealing this collapse from his readers, Trotsky is deceiving them.

The experience of our opponents has proved that we are right, it has proved that it is impossible to cooperate with the Liquidators.

#### IV. A CONCILIATOR'S ADVICE TO THE "SEVEN"

The editorial article in issue No. 1 of the *Borba* entitled "The Split in the Duma Group" contains the advice of a conciliator to the seven pro-Liquidator (or inclining towards Liquidatorism) members of the State Duma. The gist of this advice is contained in the following words:

"to consult primarily with the six<sup>47</sup> in all cases when it is necessary to reach an agreement with other groups. . . ." (P. 29.)

This is the wise counsel which, among other things, is evidently the cause of Trotsky's disagreement with the Liquidators of the *Luch*. This is precisely the opinion the *Pravda*-ists have held ever since the outbreak of the conflict between the two groups in the Duma, ever since the resolution of the summer (1913) conference<sup>48</sup> was adopted. The Russian Social-Democratic Labour group in the Duma has reiterated in the *press*, even after the split, that it continues to adhere to this position, in spite of the repeated refusals of the "seven."

From the very outset, from the time the resolution of the summer conference was adopted, we have been and are now of the opinion that *agreements* on questions concerning activities in the *Duma* are desirable and possible: since such agreements have been repeatedly arrived at with the petty-bourgeois peasant democrats (Trudoviks), it goes without saying that they are all the more possible and necessary with the petty-bourgeois, Liberal-Labour politicians.

We must not exaggerate disagreements, but we must look facts straight in the face: the "seven" are men who are inclining towards Liquidatorism, who yesterday entirely followed the lead of Dan, and today are longingly turning their gaze from Dan to Trotsky and back again to Dan. The Liquidators are a group of legalists who have broken away from the Party and are pursuing a liberal-labour policy. In view of their opposition to the "underground," unity with them in matters concerning Party organization and the working-class movement is out of the question. Whoever thinks differently is profoundly mistaken and fails to take into account the depth of the changes that have taken place since 1908.

But *agreements* on certain questions with this out of the Party, or near the Party, group are of course permissible: we *must* always compel this group, too, like the Trudoviks, to choose between the workers' (*Pravda*-ist) policy and the Liberal policy. For example, on the question of fighting for freedom of the press the Liquidators clearly oscillated between the Liberal formulation of the question, which repudiated, or lost sight of, the uncensored press, and the opposite policy, the workers' policy.

Within the limits of policy in the *Duma*, where the most important *extra-Duma* questions are not directly raised, agreements with the seven Liberal-Labour deputies are possible and desirable. On this point Trotsky has shifted *from* the Liquidator's position *to* that of the Party summer (1913) conference.

It must not be forgotten, however, that from the standpoint of the out of the Party group, agreement means something entirely different from what Party people usually mean by this term. By "agreement" in the *Duma*, non-Party people mean "*drawing up* a tactical resolution, or line." Party people mean by agreement an attempt to *enlist* others in the work of carrying out the Party line.

For example, the Trudoviks have no party. By agree-

ment they mean the "voluntary," so to speak, "drawing up" of a line with the Cadets one day, and with the Social-Democrats another day. We, however, by agreement with the Trudoviks mean something entirely different: we have Party decisions on all the important questions of tactics, and we will never depart from these decisions; by agreement with the Trudoviks we mean *winning them* to our side, *convincing* them that we are right, *not rejecting* joint action against the Black Hundreds and against the Liberals.

How far Trotsky has forgotten (after all, his association with the Liquidators has had some effect on him!) this elementary difference between the Party and non-Party point of view on agreements is shown by the following argument of his:

"The accredited representatives of the International must bring together the two sections of our divided parliamentary group and jointly with them ascertain the points of agreement and points of disagreement. . . . A detailed tactical resolution formulating the principles of parliamentary tactics may be drawn up. . . ." (No. 1, pp. 29-30.)

Here you have a characteristic and typical example of the Liquidatorist method of formulating the question! Trotsky's journal forgets about the Party; after all, is such a trifle worth remembering?

When different parties in Europe (Trotsky is fond of talking in and out of season about Europe-ism) conclude agreements, or unite, they do it in the following way: their respective representatives meet and first of all ascertain the points of disagreement (precisely what the International proposed in relation to Russia, without in the least including in the resolution Kautsky's thoughtless statement that "the old party no longer exists"). After ascertaining the points of disagreement, the representatives decide *what decisions* (resolutions, conditions, etc.) on questions of tactics, organization, etc., *should be submitted to the congresses of the two parties*. If they succeed in arriving at unanimous decisions, the

congresses decide whether to adopt them or not. If *different* proposals are made, they too, are submitted for final decision to the congresses of the two parties.

The Liquidators and Trotsky are "attracted" only by *European* models of opportunism, they are not in the least attracted by the European models of party methods.

"A detailed tactical resolution" will be drawn up by the members of the Duma!! This example should serve the Russian "advanced workers," with whom Trotsky has good reason to be displeased, as a striking illustration of the lengths to which the coteries in Vienna and in Paris—who persuaded even Kautsky that there was "no party" in Russia—go in their ludicrous projectmongering. But although it is sometimes possible to fool foreigners on this score, the Russian "advanced workers" (even at the risk of provoking terrible Trotsky to another outburst of displeasure) will laugh in the faces of these projectmongers.

"Detailed tactical resolutions," they will tell them, "are drawn up among us (we don't know how it is done among you non-Party people) by Party congresses and conferences, for example, 1907, 1908, 1910, 1912 and 1913. We shall have much pleasure in acquainting uninformed foreigners, and also forgetful Russians, with our Party decisions, and still greater pleasure in asking the representatives of the 'seven,' or 'Augustians' or 'Levitsians'<sup>49</sup> or anybody else, to acquaint us with the resolutions of their congresses, or conferences, and to bring up at their next congresses the definite question of the attitude they should adopt towards our resolutions, or towards the resolution of the neutral Lettish Congress of 1914, etc."

This is what the "advanced workers" of Russia will say to the various projectmongers, and this *has already been said* in the Marxist press, for example, by the organized Marxists of St. Petersburg. Trotsky thinks fit to ignore these published terms to the Liquidators? The worse for Trotsky. It is our duty to warn our readers of the ridiculous-



ness of "unity" (the August type of "unity"?) projectmongering which refuses to reckon with the will of the majority of the class-conscious workers of Russia.

## V. TROTSKY'S LIQUIDATORIST VIEWS

In his new journal Trotsky tried to say as little as possible about the substance of his own views. *Put Pravdy* (No. 37) has already noted that Trotsky did not utter a word either on the question of the "underground" or on the slogan of fighting for an open party, etc.\* That, among other things, is why we say that when attempts are made to form a separate organization which is to have *no* ideological and political physiognomy, it is *the worst* form of factionalism.

But although Trotsky refrained from expounding his views openly, a number of passages in his journal reveals what ideas he smuggles in surreptitiously.

In the very first editorial article, in the first issue of his journal, we read the following:

"The prerevolutionary Social-Democratic Party in our country was a *workers'* party only in ideas and aims. Actually, it was an organization of the Marxist intelligentsia, which led the **awakened** working class. . . ." (5)

This is the old Liberal and Liquidator ditty, which is really the prelude to the *repudiation* of the Party. This ditty is based on a distortion of historical facts. The strikes of 1895-96 already gave rise to a *mass* working-class movement which both in ideas and organization was connected with the Social-Democratic movement. And in these strikes, in this economic and non-economic agitation, the "intelligentsia *led* the working class"!!!

Or take the following exact statistics of political offences in the period 1901-03 compared with the preceding period.

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\* See Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. XX, pp. 140-42.—*Ed.*

OCCUPATIONS OF PARTICIPANTS  
IN THE MOVEMENT FOR EMANCIPATION PROSECUTED  
FOR POLITICAL OFFENCES (PER CENT)

Period	Agriculture	Industry and commerce	Liberal professions and students	No definite occupation, and no occupation
1884-90 . . . . .	7.1	15.1	53.3	19.9
1901-03 . . . . .	9.0	46.1	28.7	8.0

We see that in the 'eighties, when there was as yet no Social-Democratic Party in Russia, and when the movement was "Narodnik," the intelligentsia predominated, they accounted for over half the participants.

But we get an entirely different picture in 1901-03, when a Social-Democratic Party already existed, and when the old *Iskra* was conducting its work. The intelligentsia already constituted the *minority* among the participants in the movement; the *workers* ("industry and commerce") are far more numerous than the intelligentsia, and the workers and peasants together constitute more than half the total.

It was precisely in the conflict of trends within the Marxist movement that the petty-bourgeois intellectual *wing* of Social-Democracy made itself felt, beginning with "Economism" (1895-1903) and continuing with "Menshevism" (1903-08) and "Liquidatorism" (1908-14). Trotsky repeats the Liquidatorist slander against the Party and is afraid to touch the history of the twenty years' conflict of trends within the Party.

Here is another example.

"In its attitude towards parliamentarism, Russian Social-Democracy passed through the same three stages"... (as in other countries) ... "first 'boycottism' ... then the recognition of parliamentary tactics in principle, but" ... (that magnificent "but," the very same "but" which Shchedrin translated as: The ears never grow higher than the

forehead, never!) ... "for purely agitational purposes ... and lastly, the presentation from the rostrum of the Duma ... of current demands. . . ." (No. 1, p. 34.)

This, too, is a Liquidatorist distortion of history. The distinction between the second and third stages was invented in order to smuggle in defence of reformism and opportunism. Boycottism as a stage in "the attitude of Social-Democracy towards parliamentarism" never existed *either* in Europe (where there was and still is anarchism) *or* in Russia, where the boycott of the Bulygin Duma, for example, applied *only* to a definite institution, was *never* linked up with "parliamentarism," and was engendered by the peculiar nature of the struggle between Liberalism and Marxism for the continuation of the onslaught. Trotsky says absolutely nothing about the way this struggle affected the conflict between the two trends of Marxism!

When dealing with history one must explain concrete questions and the class roots of the different trends; whoever wants in the Marxist way to study the class struggle and the conflict of trends over the question of participating in the Bulygin Duma will see there the roots of the liberal-labour policy. But Trotsky "deals with" history only in order to *evade* concrete questions and to *invent* a justification, or a semblance of justification, for the present-day opportunists!

"... Actually, all trends," he writes, "employ the same methods of fighting and building."—"The outcries about the Liberal danger in our working-class movement are simply a crude, sectarian travesty of reality" (No. 1, pp. 5 and 35).

This is a very clear defence of the Liquidators, and a very wrathful one. But we will take the liberty of quoting at least one tiny fact, one of the very latest. Trotsky merely hurls phrases about; we would like the workers themselves to ponder over this fact.

It is a fact that the *Severnaya Rabochaya Gazeta*, of March 13, wrote the following:

*"Instead of emphasizing the definite, concrete task that confronts the working class, viz., to compel the Duma to throw out the Bill (on the press), a diffuse formula is proposed of fighting for the 'uncurtailed slogans,' and at the same time the illegal press is widely advertised, which can only lead to the relaxation of the workers' struggle for their legal press."*

This is a clear, precise, documentary defence of the Liquidatorist policy and a criticism of the *Pravda*-ist policy. Well, will any literate person say that both trends employ "the same methods of fighting and building" on this question? Will any literate person say that the Liquidators are *not* pursuing a *liberal-labour* policy on this question, that the Liberal danger in the working-class movement is purely imaginary?

Trotsky avoids facts and concrete references precisely because they relentlessly refute all his angry outcries and pompous phrases. It is very easy, of course, to adopt a pose and say: "a crude, sectarian travesty." Nor is it difficult to add a still more stinging and pompous catch phrase, such as "emancipation from conservative factionalism."

But isn't this very cheap? Is not this weapon borrowed from the arsenal of the period when Trotsky posed in all his brilliance before audiences of high-school boys?

Nevertheless, the "advanced workers," with whom Trotsky is so angry, would like to be told plainly and clearly: Do you approve of the "method of fighting and building" that is definitely expressed in the above-quoted appraisal of a definite political campaign? Yes or no? If you do, then you are pursuing a liberal-labour policy, betraying Marxism and the Party; and to talk of "peace" or of "unity" with *such* a policy, with groups which pursue *such* a policy, means deceiving yourself and others.

If not, then say so plainly. Phrases will not astonish, will not satisfy and will not intimidate the present-day workers.

Incidentally, the policy advocated by the Liquidators in

the above-quoted passage is a foolish one even from the Liberal point of view, for the passage of a Bill in the Duma depends on "Zemstvo-Octobrists" of the type of Bennigsen, who has already exposed his cards in committee.

\* \* \*

The old participants in the Marxist movement in Russia know Trotsky very well and there is no need to discuss him for their benefit. But the younger generation of workers do not know him, and it is therefore necessary to discuss him, for he is typical of all the five coteries abroad, which, in fact, are also vacillating between the Liquidators and the Party.

In the period of the old *Iskra* (1901-03), these waverers, who flitted from the "Economists" to the "*Iskra*-ists" and back again were dubbed "Tushino deserters" (the name given in the Turbulent Times in Rus to soldiers who deserted from one camp to another).

When we discuss Liquidatorism we discuss a definite ideological trend which grew up in the course of many years, the roots of which are interlaced with those of "Menshevism" and "Economism" in the twenty years' history of Marxism, and which is connected with the policy and ideology of a definite class, the liberal bourgeoisie.

The only ground the "Tushino deserters" have for claiming that they stand above factions is that they "borrow" their ideas from one faction one day and from another faction another day. Trotsky was an ardent "*Iskra*-ist" in 1901-03, and Ryazanov described his role at the Congress of 1903 as "Lenin's cudgel." At the end of 1903, Trotsky was an ardent Menshevik, i.e., he deserted from the *Iskra*-ists to the "Economists." He said that there was "a gulf between the old and the new *Iskra*." In 1904-05, he deserted the Mensheviks and began to oscillate, cooperating with Martynov (the "Economist") at one moment and proclaiming his incongruously Left "permanent revolution" theory the next. In 1906-07, he approached the Bolsheviks, and in the

spring of 1907 he declared that he was in agreement with Rosa Luxemburg.

In the period of disintegration, after long "non-factional" vacillation, he again went to the Right, and in August 1912, he entered into a bloc with the Liquidators. Now he has deserted them again, although, *in substance*, he reiterates their paltry ideas.

Such types are characteristic as the wreckage of past historical formations, of the time when the mass working-class movement in Russia was still latent, and when every coterie had "sufficient room" in which to pose as a trend, group or faction, in short, as a "power," negotiating amalgamation with others.

The younger generation of workers must know thoroughly whom they are dealing with when people come before them making incredibly pretentious claims, but absolutely refusing to reckon with *either* the Party decisions which since 1908 have defined and established our attitude towards Liquidatorism, *or* with the experience of the present-day working-class movement in Russia which has actually brought about the *unity* of the majority on the basis of full recognition of the aforesaid decisions.

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May 1914

V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*,  
Fourth Russian Edition,  
Vol. XX, pp. 301-22

**THE NEW RISE  
OF THE WORKING-CLASS MOVEMENT  
BEFORE THE  
FIRST IMPERIALIST WAR**





## IN MEMORY OF HERZEN

One hundred years have elapsed since Herzen's birth. The whole of liberal Russia is paying homage to him, carefully evading the serious questions of Socialism, and assiduously concealing that which distinguished Herzen the *revolutionary* from a liberal. The conservative press, too, is commemorating the Herzen anniversary, mendaciously asserting that in his last years Herzen renounced revolution. And, abroad, phrasemongering reigns supreme in the liberal and Narodnik orations on Herzen.

The working-class party should commemorate the Herzen anniversary not for the sake of philistine glorification, but for the purpose of making clear its own tasks and ascertaining the real place held in history by this writer who played a great part in paving the way for the Russian revolution.

Herzen belonged to the generation of revolutionaries among the nobility and landlords of the first half of the past century. The nobility gave Russia the Birens and Arakcheyevs,<sup>50</sup> innumerable "drunkard officers, bullies, gamblers, heroes of fairs, whips, roisterers, floggers, pimps," as well as amiable Manilovs. "But," wrote Herzen, "among them developed the men of December 14,<sup>51</sup> a phalanx of heroes reared, like Romulus and Remus, on the milk of a wild beast. . . . They were titans, hammered out of pure steel from head to foot, warrior martyrs who knowingly went to certain death in order to awaken the young generation to a new life and to purify the children born in an environment of tyranny and servility."

Herzen was one of those children. The uprising of the Decembrists awakened and "purified" him. In feudal Russia of the forties of the nineteenth century he rose to a height which placed him on a level with the greatest thinkers of his time. He assimilated Hegel's dialectics. He realized that it was "the algebra of revolution." He went further than Hegel, following Feuerbach to materialism. The first of his *Letters on the Study of Nature*, "Empiricism and Idealism," written in 1844, reveals to us a thinker who even now stands head and shoulders above the multitude of modern empiricist natural scientists and the swarms of present-day idealist and semi-idealist philosophers. Herzen stood on the threshold of dialectical materialism, and halted—before historical materialism.

It was this "halt" that caused Herzen's spiritual shipwreck after the defeat of the revolution of 1848. Herzen had already left Russia and watched the revolution at close range. He was a democrat at the time, a revolutionary, a Socialist. But his "socialism" was one of the numerous forms and varieties of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois Socialism characteristic of the epoch of 1848, which were dealt their death-blow in the June days<sup>52</sup> of that year. In point of fact, this was not Socialism at all, but merely sentimental phrases, benign visions, in which was embodied the *then* revolutionism of the bourgeois democracy, as well as of the proletariat which had not freed itself from its influence.

Herzen's spiritual shipwreck, the profound scepticism and pessimism to which he fell prey after 1848, was the shipwreck of the *bourgeois illusions* of Socialism. Herzen's spiritual drama was a product and reflection of that epoch in world history when the revolutionism of the bourgeois democracy was *already* passing away (in Europe), and the revolutionism of the socialist proletariat had *not yet* ripened. This is something the Russian liberal knights of verbal incontinence, who are now trying to cover up their own counterrevolutionism by florid phrases about Herzen's scept-

ticism, have not understood and cannot understand. With these knights, who betrayed the Russian Revolution of 1905, and have even forgotten to think of the great calling of a *revolutionary*, scepticism is a form of transition from democracy to liberalism—to that servile, vile, infamous and brutal liberalism which shot down the workers in 1848, restored shattered thrones, applauded Napoleon III and which Herzen *cursed*, unable to understand its class nature.

With Herzen scepticism was a form of transition from the illusions of "above-class" bourgeois democratism to the stern, inexorable and invincible class struggle of the proletariat. The proof: the "Letters to an Old Comrade," to Bakunin, written by Herzen in 1869, a year before his death. In them Herzen breaks with the anarchist Bakunin. True, Herzen still sees in this break nothing more than a disagreement on tactics; he does not see the gulf between the world outlook of the proletarian who is confident of the victory of his class and that of the petty bourgeois who has despaired of his salvation. True enough, in these letters Herzen again repeats the old bourgeois-democratic phrases to the effect that Socialism must preach "a sermon addressed equally to workman and master, to farmer and burgher." But for all that, in breaking with Bakunin, Herzen turned his gaze not to liberalism but to the *International*—to the International led by Marx, to the International which had begun to "*rally the legions*" of the proletariat, to unite "*the world of labour*" "which is abandoning the world of those who enjoy without working."

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Failing as he did to understand the bourgeois-democratic essence of the entire movement of 1848 and of all the forms of pre-Marxist Socialism, Herzen was still less able to understand the bourgeois nature of the Russian Revolution. Herzen is the founder of "Russian" Socialism, "Narodism." He saw "Socialism" in the emancipation of the peasants *with land*, in community landownership and in the peasant

idea of "the right to the land." His pet ideas on this subject he set forth an untold number of times.

Actually, in this doctrine of Herzen's, as, indeed, in the whole of Russian Narodism, right down to the faded Narodism of the present-day "Socialist-Revolutionaries," there is *not a grain* of Socialism. Like the various forms of "the Socialism of 1848" in the West, this is the same sort of sentimental phrases, the same sort of benign visions, embodying the *revolutionism* of the bourgeois peasant democracy in Russia. The greater the amount of land the peasants would have received in 1861 and the cheaper the price they would have had to pay for it, the more strongly would the power of the feudal landlords have been undermined and the more rapidly, fully and widely would capitalism have developed in Russia. The idea of "the right to the land" and of "equal distribution of the land" represents but the formulated revolutionary aspirations to achieve equality cherished by the peasants fighting for the complete overthrow of the power of the landlords, for the complete abolition of landlordism.

This was fully proved by the Revolution of 1905. On the one hand, the proletariat came out quite independently at the head of the revolutionary struggle, having created the Social-Democratic Labour Party; on the other hand, the revolutionary peasants (the "Trudoviks" and the "Peasant League") who fought for every form of the abolition of landlordism, going as far as demanding "the abolition of private property in land," fought precisely as proprietors, as small entrepreneurs.

In our day, the controversy over the "socialist nature" of the right to land, etc., serves only to *obscure* and gloss over the really important and vital historical question: the difference of *interests* of the liberal bourgeoisie and the revolutionary peasantry in the Russian *bourgeois* revolution; in other words, the question of the liberal and the democratic, the "compromising" (monarchist) and the republican trends manifested in this revolution. This is exactly the question which

Herzen's *Kolokol* posed, if we look beyond the words and get down to the essentials, if we investigate the class struggle as the basis of "theories" and doctrines and not vice versa.

Herzen created a free Russian press abroad—that was the great service which he rendered. The *Polyarnaya Zvezda* took up the tradition of the Decembrists. The *Kolokol* (1857-67) stalwartly championed the emancipation of the peasants. The slavish silence was broken.

But Herzen had a landlord, aristocratic background. He had left Russia in 1847; he had not seen the revolutionary people and could have no faith in it. Hence, his liberal appeal to the "upper ranks." Hence, his numerous sugary letters in the *Kolokol* addressed to Alexander II the Hangman, which today one cannot read without a feeling of disgust. Chernyshevsky, Dobrolyubov, and Serno-Solovyovich, who represented the new generation of revolutionary commoners, were a thousand times right when they reproached Herzen for these lapses from democratism to liberalism. However, it must be said in fairness to Herzen that, much as he vacillated between democratism and liberalism, the democrat in him nevertheless gained the upper hand.

When Kavelin, one of the most repulsive types representative of liberal obsequiousness—who at one time was enthusiastic about the *Kolokol* for the very reason that it manifested *liberal* tendencies—came out against a Constitution, attacked revolutionary agitation, condemned "violence" and appeals to it, and began to preach tolerance, Herzen broke with this liberal sage. Herzen turned upon his "meagre, absurd, harmful pamphlet" written "for the private guidance of the government in its liberal pretence," denounced Kavelin's "sentimental political maxims" which represented "the Russian people as cattle and the government as the embodiment of wisdom." The *Kolokol* printed an article entitled "Epitaph," which lashed out against "professors weaving the rotten cobweb of their supercilious and paltry ideas, ex-professors, once unsophisticated and subsequently

embittered because the healthy youth cannot sympathize with their scrofulous thoughts." Kavelin at once recognized himself in this portrait.

When Chernyshevsky was arrested, Kavelin, that vile liberal, wrote: "I see nothing reprehensible in the arrests . . . the revolutionary party considers all means proper for the purpose of overthrowing the government, and the government is defending itself by its own means." As if in retort to this Cadet, Herzen wrote in his article dealing with Chernyshevsky's trial: "And here are wretches, people comparable to grass under our feet, slimy creatures, who say that we must not denounce the gang of robbers and scoundrels that is governing us."

When the liberal Turgenev wrote a private letter to Alexander II assuring him that he was a loyal and obedient subject, and donated two goldpieces for the soldiers wounded during the suppression of the Polish insurrection, the *Kolokol* wrote of "the grey-haired Magdalen (of the masculine gender) who wrote to the tsar to tell him that she knew no sleep because she was tormented by the thought that the tsar was not aware of the repentance that had befallen her." And Turgenev at once recognized himself.

When the whole pack of Russian liberals scurried away from Herzen for his defence of Poland, when the whole of "educated society" turned its back on the *Kolokol*, Herzen was not dismayed. He went on championing the freedom of Poland and castigating the suppressors, the butchers, the hangmen in the service of Alexander II. Herzen saved the honour of Russian democracy. "We have saved the honour of the Russian name," he wrote to Turgenev, "and for doing so we have suffered at the hands of the slavish majority."

In commenting on a report concerning a serf peasant who killed a landlord for an attempt to rape his betrothed, Herzen exclaimed in the *Kolokol*: "Well done!" When it was reported that army officers would be appointed to superintend the "peaceable" progress of "emancipation," Her-

zen wrote: "The first wise colonel who, with his troops, instead of crushing the peasants, will take their side, is sure to ascend the throne of the Romanovs." When Colonel Reiter shot himself in Warsaw (1860) because he did not want to be an accomplice of the hangmen, Herzen wrote: "If any shooting is to be done, it is the generals who give orders to fire upon unarmed people that should be shot." When fifty peasants were killed in Bezdna, and their leader Anton Petrov was executed (April 12, 1861), Herzen wrote in the *Kolokol*:

"Oh, if only my words could reach you, toiler and sufferer of the Russian land! . . . I would teach you to despise your spiritual shepherds, placed over you by the St. Petersburg Synod and a German tsar. . . . You hate the landlord, you hate the official, you fear them—and rightly so; but you still believe in the tsar and the bishop . . . do not believe them. The tsar is with them and they are with the tsar. It is him you now see—you, the father of the youth murdered in Bezdna, and you, the son of a father murdered in Penza. . . . Your shepherds are as ignorant as you are and as poor as you. . . . Such was the monk Anthony (not Bishop Anthony, but Anton of Bezdna) who suffered for you in Kazan. . . . The corpses of your saints will not perform forty-eight miracles, and praying to them will not cure a toothache; but their living memory may produce one miracle—your emancipation."

This shows how infamously and vilely Herzen is being slandered by our liberals entrenched in the slavish "legal" press, who extol the weak points in Herzen and are silent about his strong points. It is not Herzen's fault, but his misfortune, that he could not see the revolutionary people in Russia itself in the 1840's. When he did behold the revolutionary people in the 'sixties he fearlessly took the side of the revolutionary democracy against liberalism. He fought for a victory of the people over tsardom, not for a deal between the liberal bourgeoisie and the landlords' tsar. He raised aloft the banner of revolution.

In commemorating Herzen we clearly see the three generations, the three classes that were active in the Russian

revolution. At first—nobles and landlords, the Decembrists and Herzen. The circle of these revolutionaries was a narrow one. They were very far removed from the people. But their work was not in vain. The Decembrists awakened Herzen. Herzen launched revolutionary agitation.

This agitation was taken up, extended, strengthened, and tempered by the revolutionary commoners, beginning with Chernyshevsky and ending with the heroes of the "Narodnaya Volya." The circle of fighters widened, their contacts with the people became closer. "The young helmsmen of the impending storm," Herzen said of them. But as yet it was not the storm itself.

The storm is the movement of the masses themselves. The proletariat, the only class that is revolutionary to the end, rose at the head of the masses and for the first time aroused millions of peasants to open revolutionary struggle. The first onslaught in this storm took place in 1905. The next is beginning to develop before our very eyes.

In commemorating Herzen, the proletariat is learning from his example to appreciate the great importance of revolutionary theory. It is learning that selfless devotion to the revolution and the work of revolutionary propaganda among the people are not wasted even if long decades divide the sowing from the harvest. It is learning to define the role of the various classes in the Russian and in the international revolution. Enriched by these lessons, the proletariat will fight its way through to a free union with the socialist workers of all lands. It will crush that vile thing, the tsarist monarchy, against which Herzen was the first to raise the great banner of struggle by addressing his *free Russian words* to the masses.

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May 8 (April 25), 1912

V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*,  
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## **POLITICAL PARTIES IN RUSSIA**

The elections to the State Duma are compelling all the parties to intensify their agitation and muster their forces, each party endeavouring to return the greatest possible number of "its own" deputies.

In Russia, like in all other countries, the election campaign is attended by the most brazen self-advertisement. All the bourgeois parties, that is to say, those that uphold the economic privileges of the capitalists, are advertising themselves in the same way as individual capitalists boost their wares. Look at the commercial advertisements in any newspaper: you will see that the capitalists think up the most "striking," the loudest and most fashionable names for their merchandise, which they praise in the most unrestrained terms, stopping at no lie or invention.

The public—at any rate in the big cities and trade centres—have long since become inured to commercial advertisements and know just what price can be set on them. Unfortunately, political advertisement misleads an incomparably greater number of people, it is much more difficult to expose it, and its deception is much more tenacious. The names of parties, both in Europe and in Russia, are often chosen purely for purposes of advertisement, the "programs" of parties are more often than not written with the sole purpose of defrauding the public. The greater the degree of political freedom in a capitalist country, the more democracy there is, i.e., the greater the power of the people and of the popular representatives, the more brazen-faced, as a rule, is the self-advertisement of parties.

Such being the case, how is the public to find its bearings in the fight among the various parties? Does not this fight, attended as it is by fraud and publicity, indicate that representative institutions, parliaments, assemblies of popular representatives, are worthless and even harmful on general principles—as the savage reactionaries, the enemies of parliamentarism, are trying to make us believe? No. In the absence of representative institutions, there is *even much more* of deception, political mendacity and all sorts of fraudulent tricks; and the people possess fewer means of exposing the deception, of ascertaining the truth.

To find one's bearings in the fight among the parties, one must not take words at their face value, but study the real history of the parties—and not so much what they say about themselves, but their *deeds*, how they go about solving various political problems, how they *behave* in matters involving the vital interests of the various classes of society: landlords, capitalists, peasants, workers, etc.

The greater the amount of political freedom in a country, and the more stable and democratic its representative institutions, the easier is it for the masses of the people to find their bearings in the interparty fight and to *learn politics*, i.e., to see through the lies and to ascertain the truth.

The division of any society into different political parties is revealed clearest of all in times of profound crises which shake the entire country. At such times governments are compelled to seek support among the various classes of society; all empty phrasemongering, all superficial and extraneous matter are brushed aside by the gravity of the struggle; the parties bend all their efforts and address their appeal to the *masses* of the people, and the masses, guided by their unerring instinct, enlightened by the experience of the open struggle, follow those parties which represent the interests of a particular class.

The epochs of such crises always determine the party alignment of the social forces of the given country for many years and even for decades ahead. In Germany, for instance, such crises were the wars of 1866 and 1870; in Russia—the events of 1905. We cannot understand the essence of our political parties, nor gain a clear idea as to which *classes* the various parties in Russia represent, without going back to the events of that year.

Let us begin our brief sketch of the political parties in Russia with the parties of the extreme Right.

On the extreme right flank we find the League of the Russian People.

The program of this party is set forth in the following passage from the *Russkoye Znaniya*, the paper of the League of the Russian People, published by A. I. Dubrovin:

"The League of the Russian People, which on June 3, 1907, was accorded the honour of being called upon from the height of the tsar's throne to be its reliable mainstay, and to serve as an example of law and order to all and everything, professes that the will of the tsar can be exercised only on condition: 1) of the full manifestation of the tsar's absolute power, which is indissolubly and vitally bound up with the Russian Orthodox Church, canonically established; 2) of the domination of the Russian nationality not only in the internal gubernias, but also in the frontier regions; 3) of the existence of a State Duma, made up exclusively of Russians, as the main assistant of the absolute monarch in his labours to build up the state; 4) of the complete observance of the principles of the League of the Russian People in regard to the Jews, and 5) of the removal from government service of all officials who are opponents of the tsar's autocratic power."

We have copied this solemn declaration of the *Rights* word for word, on the one hand, in order to acquaint the reader with the original itself, and, on the other, because the fundamental motives set forth in it hold good for all the parties of the majority in the Third Duma, i.e., of the "Nationalists" and Octobrists as well. This will be brought out in the further exposition.

To all intents and purposes, the program of the League of the Russian People repeats the old slogan of the days of serfdom, viz.: Orthodoxy, Autocracy, Nationality. In regard to the question on which the League of the Russian People is generally considered as differing from other kindred parties—namely, recognition or repudiation of “constitutional” principles in the Russian state system—it is particularly important to note that the League of the Russian People is by *no means* opposed to representative institutions in general. It is evident from the program cited above that the League of the Russian People favours a State Duma that will play the part of “assistant.”

Moreover, the specific nature of the Russian Constitution—if we may call it that—is correctly stated by the Dubrovinite, i.e., his statement accords with the actual state of affairs. This is the stand taken by both the Nationalists and Octobrists in their practical politics. The controversy between these parties over the “Constitution” is largely a fight over words: The Rights are not opposed to a Duma, only they are especially eager to emphasize that it must be an “assistant,” while in no way defining its rights. Nor do the Nationalists and the Octobrists, for their part, insist on any strictly defined rights; in fact, the question of real guarantees of rights is furthest from their minds. The “Constitutionalists” of the Octobrist camp are in full accord with the “opponents of Constitution” in accepting the Constitution of June 3.

The program of the Black Hundreds is plain, clear and outspoken on the point of baiting non-Russians in general and the Jews in particular. As is generally the case, they bring out more rudely, brazenly and ebulliently what the other government parties are more or less “bashfully” or diplomatically keeping to themselves.

In actual fact, both the Nationalists and the Octobrists—as is well known to everyone who is at all familiar with their activity in the Third Duma, or with such press organs as the

*Novoye Vremya*, *Svyet*, *Golos Moskvy*—have a hand in the baiting of non-Russians.

The question is: What is the social basis of the party of the Right? What class does it represent? What class does it serve?

Its reversion to the slogans of serfdom, its upholding of all that is old, of all that is mediæval in Russian life, its complete satisfaction with the Constitution of June 3—the *landlords'* Constitution—and its defence of the privileges of the nobility and officialdom—all this provides a clear answer to our question. The Rights are the party of the feudal landlords, of the Council of the United Nobility. Not for nothing did that Council play such a prominent—nay, a leading—role in the dispersal of the Second Duma, the change of the electoral law and the *coup d'état* of June 3.

To get an idea of the economic strength of this class in Russia we need but mention the following fundamental fact, proved by the data of the *government* statistics of landownership in 1905, statistics published by the Ministry of the Interior.

Less than 30,000 landlords in European Russia own 70,000,000 dessiatines of land. A *similar* amount of land is owned by 10,000,000 peasant households with the smallest allotments. Thus we have an average of about 2,300 dessiatines per big landlord, and, in the case of the poor peasants, an average of seven dessiatines of land—per family, per household.

It is quite natural and inevitable that the peasant cannot live on such an "allotment"; he can only die by slow stages. The recurring spells of famine affecting millions, like this year's famine, continue to play havoc with the husbandry of the peasants in Russia following each crop failure. The peasants are obliged to rent land from the landlords paying for it in various forms of *labour*. To pay for the use of the land, the peasant works for the landlord with his horse and

his implements. This is the same *corvée*, only it is not officially called serfdom. With 2,300 dessiatines of land, on an average, at their disposal the landlords, in most cases, can run their estates only by keeping the peasants in bondage, by the system of labour rent, that is to say, the *corvée* system. They cultivate only part of their huge estates with the help of hired labourers.

Further, that same class of the landed nobility supplies the state with the overwhelming majority of all higher and intermediate officials. The privileges of officialdom in Russia represent another side of the privileges and agrarian power of the landed nobility. It is therefore obvious that the Council of the United Nobility and the "Right" parties are upholding the policy of the old feudal traditions not as a matter of accident, but as a matter of inevitability, not because of the "ill will" of individuals, but under pressure of the *interests* of a tremendously powerful *class*. The old ruling class, the survivals of landlordism, remaining the ruling class as heretofore, has created for itself a party after its own fashion—the League of the Russian People or the "Rights" in the State Duma and in the State Council.

But, since there exist representative institutions, and since the *masses* have already come out openly in the political arena, as they did in Russia in 1905, each party is bound, within certain limits, to appeal to the populace. Now, in the name of what can the Right parties appeal to the people?

Of course, they cannot speak openly in defence of the interests of the landlords. That is why they speak of preserving the old traditions in general, that is why they spare no efforts to foment distrust toward non-Russians, particularly toward the Jews, to incite the utterly ignorant and the utterly benighted to pogroms, to Jew-baiting. The effort to maintain the privileges of the nobility, the officials and the landlords is disguised with talk about the "oppression" of Russians by aliens.

Such is the party of the "Right." One of its members, Purishkevich, the most prominent spokesman of the Rights in the Third Duma, has worked a lot, and successfully, to *show* the people *what* the Rights want, *how* they act, *whom* they serve. Purishkevich is a gifted agitator.

Next to the "Rights," who have forty-six seats in the Third Duma, are the "*Nationalists*" with ninety-one seats. There is hardly a shade of difference between them and the Rights. In fact these are not two parties, but one party which has divided the "labour" of baiting non-Russians, "Cadets" (liberals), democrats, etc. The ones are acting more rudely, the others are a bit more refined, but both are *doing* the same thing. Indeed, it is to the government's *advantage* to keep somewhat apart from the "extreme" Rights who are capable of perpetrating every sort of scandal, pogrom, the murder of people like Herzenstein, Yollo, Karavayev, to make it appear that *they* are "criticizing" the government from the right. . . . No serious significance can be attached to the distinction between the Rights and the Nationalists.

The *Octobrists* in the Third Duma are one hundred and thirty-one strong, including, of course, the "Right Octobrists." Essentially there is nothing in the present policy of the Octobrists to distinguish them from the Rights, the difference between them consisting in the fact that, in addition to the landlords, the Octobrist Party serves also the interests of the big capitalists, the conservative merchants, the bourgeoisie which has taken such fright at the awakening of the workers, and then of the peasants, to independent political life, that it turned heart and soul to the defence of the old ways. There are capitalists in Russia—and quite a number of them, too—whose treatment of the workers is not a whit better than the treatment of the serfs of old at the hands of the landlords; they look upon workers and clerks as their menials, as servants. Nobody is better fitted to defend these old ways than the Right parties, the Nationalists and the Octobrists. There is also the brand of capital-

ists who at the Zemstvo and municipal congresses in 1904 and 1905 demanded a "Constitution," but in their *hostility* to the workers are fully willing to be content with the Constitution of June 3.

The Octobrist Party is the principal counterrevolutionary party of the landlords and capitalists. It is the leading party of the Third Duma: the 131 Octobrists with the 137 Rights and Nationalists constitute a solid majority in the Third Duma.

The electoral law of June 3, 1907 *guaranteed* the landlords and the big capitalists a majority: the landlords and the electors of the first urban curia (i.e., the big capitalists) have a safe majority in *all* the gubernia assemblies electing deputies to the Duma. In 28 gubernias the landowners alone have a majority in the gubernia electoral assemblies. The entire policy of the Third-of-June Government has been carried out with the assistance of the Octobrist Party, and this party bears the responsibility for all the sins and crimes committed by the Third Duma.

In words, in their program, the Octobrists uphold a "Constitution" and even... liberties! Actually, this party supported all the measures taken against the workers (the insurance bill, for one thing—recall the conduct of the *Chairman* of the Duma Committee on Labour, Baron Tiesenhausen!), against the peasants, and against any restriction of tyranny and persecution. The Octobrists are as much a government party as the Nationalists. The position is not the least bit altered by the fact that from time to time—particularly on the eve of elections!—the Octobrists make "oppositionary" speeches. In all countries, wherever parliaments exist, it has been observed from time immemorial that the bourgeois parties indulge in this sort of *playing at opposition*—a harmless game as far as they are concerned, because no government takes it seriously; a game which on occasion proves useful to them as a means of "greasing" the voter by a show of opposition.



However, the greatest expert, the virtuoso, at the game of opposition is the principal opposition party of the Third Duma—the Cadets, *Constitutional-“Democrats,”* the “People’s Freedom” Party.

The very name of the party is part of the game; for it is *in no wise* a democratic party, and by *no manner of means* a people’s party; it is a party, not of freedom, but of half-freedom, if not of quarter-freedom.

In actual fact, it is the party of the liberal-monarchist bourgeoisie, which dreads the popular movement far more than reaction.

The democrat has faith in the people, faith in the movement of the masses, and he renders this movement every assistance, although entertaining at times (such are the bourgeois democrats, the Trudoviks) wrong ideas about the significance of this movement within the framework of the capitalist system. The democrat sincerely strives to put an end to *all* the survivals of medievalism.

The liberal fears the movement of the masses; he tries to impede it, and *deliberately* defends certain institutions of medievalism—in fact, the most important of them—as a bulwark against the masses, particularly against the workers. The aspiration of the liberals is by no means to destroy all the foundations of the power of the Purishkeviches, but to share power with them. The democratic petty bourgeois (such as the peasant and the Trudovik) says: Everything for the people and through the people. He sincerely strives to uproot all the foundations of Purishkevichism, without, however, understanding the meaning of the struggle of the wage workers against capital. The real aim of the liberal-monarchist bourgeoisie, on the other hand, is to share power with Purishkevich and rule with him *over* the workers and *over* the small proprietors.

In the First and the Second Dumas the Cadets had a majority or occupied a leading position. They used their position for a senseless and inglorious *game*: When facing

the right they played at loyalty and at being of ministerial timber (we, they said in effect, are able to solve all the contradictions by peaceable means, in such a way as not to spoil the muzhik and not to harm Purishkevich); when facing the left they played at democratism. In the end, as a result of this game, the Cadets got a kick from the right. On the left they quite deservedly earned the name of traitors to the people's freedom. In the First and the Second Dumas they fought all the time, not only against the working-class democracy, but against the Trudoviks as well. We need but recall the fact that the Cadets *defeated* the plan proposed by the Trudoviks for the setting up of local land committees (in the First Duma), a plan based on the most elementary requirements of democracy, on the very ABC of democracy. The Cadets thus upheld the *predominance* of the landlords and officials *over* the peasants in the land-regulating commissions!

In the Third Duma the Cadets have played at a "responsible opposition," an opposition in the possessive case.<sup>53</sup> As such, they voted time and again for the Government budgets (some "democrats"!); explained to the Octobrists that there was nothing dangerous or reprehensible in their plan of "compulsory" redemption (compulsory for the peasants)—recall the speech of Berezovsky I; they commissioned Karaulov to deliver "pious" speeches from the Duma rostrum, renounced the movement of the masses, addressed their appeals to the "upper crust," and *obstructed* the efforts of the lower ranks (the Cadets' fight *against* the workers' deputies on the question of workers' insurance), and so on and so forth.

The Cadets are the party of counterrevolutionary liberalism. By their claim to the role of a "responsible opposition," that is to say, a recognized, lawful opposition *permitted* to compete with the Octobrists, an opposition not to the regime established on June 3, but of that regime—the Cadets have definitely crossed themselves off from the rolls as

"democrats." The shameless *Vekhi*-ist preachment of the Cadet ideologists, such as Messrs. Struve, Izgoyev and Co., who earned the ardent kisses of Rozanov and Anthony of Volhynia,<sup>54</sup> and the role of the Cadet Party as "responsible opposition" in the Third Duma, are two sides of the same medal. The liberal-monarchist bourgeoisie, tolerated by the Purishkeviches, is trying to seat itself next to Purishkevich.

The bloc formed by the Cadets with the "Progressives" at present, for the elections to the Fourth Duma, has provided additional proof of the profoundly counterrevolutionary nature of the Cadets. The Progressives have no claims whatever to being democrats, they have not a word to say about fighting the entire Third-of-June regime, and they have never harboured the idea of "universal suffrage" even in their dreams. They are moderate liberals who do not make a secret of their kinship with the Octobrists. The alliance between the Cadets and the Progressives must open the eyes of even the blindest "yes-men of the Cadets" to the real essence of that party.

The *democratic bourgeoisie* of Russia is represented by the Narodniks of all shades, from the most leftist among the Socialist-Revolutionaries to the Popular Socialists and Trudoviks. They all readily bandy "Socialist" phrases, but it would be impermissible for a class-conscious worker to be deceived as to the real meaning of these phrases. Actually, there is *not a grain* of Socialism in any "right to the land," or in any "equal distribution" of the land, or in the "socialization of the land." This should be clear to everyone who knows that the abolition of private property in land and a new, even the "fairest" possible, distribution of the land, far from infringing on commodity production and the domination of the market, money and capital, leads to their even wider development.

However, the phrases about "the principle of labour" and "Popular Socialism" express the democrat's profound

faith in the possibility and indispensability of destroying *all* the survivals of medievalism in land ownership and, at the same time, in the political system (and his sincere striving to achieve this). Whereas the liberals (the Cadets) strive to share political power and political privileges with the Purishkeviches, the Narodniks are democrats for the very reason that they are striving, and must strive at present to abolish *all* the privileges of landed property and *all* privileges in politics.

Such is the position of the great bulk of the Russian peasantry that it cannot even entertain the thought of any compromise with the Purishkeviches (something entirely possible, accessible and *dear to the heart* of the liberal). That is why the democratism of the petty bourgeoisie is sure to have mass roots in Russia for quite a long time to come, whereas Stolypin's agrarian reform, that expression of the Purishkeviches' bourgeois policy against the muzhik, has so far produced nothing durable, save the . . . starvation of thirty million peasants!

The millions of starving small proprietors cannot help striving for a *different* kind of agrarian reform, a democratic agrarian reform, which cannot transcend the bounds of capitalism or abolish wage slavery, but *can* sweep the survivals of *medievalism* from the face of the Russian land.

The Trudoviks are an extremely weak group in the Third Duma, but they represent the *masses*. The vacillation of the Trudoviks between the Cadets and the working-class democracy is the inevitable result of the class position of the small proprietors, and the special difficulties encountered in rallying, organizing and enlightening these small proprietors are at the root of the extreme indefiniteness and amorphousness of the Trudoviks as a party. That is why the Trudoviks, with the aid of the stupid "Otzovism" of the Left Narodniks, present the sad picture of a liquidated party.

The difference between the Trudoviks and our own near-Marxist Liquidators is that the former are Liquidators because of their weakness, whereas the latter are Liquidators with malice aforethought. The task of the working-class democrats is to help the weak petty-bourgeois democrats, wrest them from the influence of the liberals, rally the democratic camp against the counterrevolutionary Constitutional-Democrats, and not only against the Rights.

As regards the working-class democracy, which had its group in the Third Duma, we can say here but little.

Everywhere in Europe the parties of the working class took shape in the process of casting off the influence of the general democratic ideology, while learning to distinguish between the struggle of the wage workers against capital and the struggle against feudalism—doing this, among other things, for the sake of lending strength to the latter struggle, for the sake of ridding it of any wavering and timidity. In Russia the working-class democracy completely dissociated itself both from the liberals and the bourgeois democrats (the Trudoviks), thus contributing enormously to the cause of the democracy as a whole.

The Liquidatorist trend among the working-class democrats (the *Nasha Zarya* and the *Zhivoye Dyelo*) shares the weakness of the Trudovik trend, glorifies amorphousness, longs for the status of a “tolerated” opposition, repudiates the hegemony of the workers, confines itself to *words* about an “open” organization (while heaping abuse on the organization which does not function openly), advocates a liberal policy of the working class. The connection between this trend and the dispersion and spirit of decadence characteristic of the period of counterrevolution is obvious; its dropping away from the working-class democracy is clear.

The class-conscious workers, while not liquidating anything, rallying their ranks in opposition to the liberal influences, organizing as a class, developing all forms of trade union and other unity, are coming forward both in the capac-

ity of representatives of *wage* labour against capital and as representatives of consistent democracy against the entire old regime in Russia and against any concessions to that regime.

By way of illustration, we give below the figures relating to the strength of the various parties in the Third Duma, which we take from the official Duma *Handbook* for 1912.

### PARTIES IN THE THIRD DUMA

#### *Landlords*

Rights . . . . .	46
Nationalists . . . . .	74
Independent Nationalists . . . . .	17
Right Octobrists . . . . .	11
Octobrists . . . . .	120
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<i>Total Government parties . . . . .</i>	<i>268</i>

#### *The Bourgeoisie*

Progressives . . . . .	36
Cadets . . . . .	52
The Polish Kolo . . . . .	11
Polish-Lithuanian-Byelorussian Group . . . . .	7
Moslem Group . . . . .	9
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<i>Total Liberals . . . . .</i>	<i>115</i>

#### *Bourgeois Democrats*

The Trudovik Group . . . . .	14
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#### *Working-Class Democrats*

Social-Democrats . . . . .	13
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<i>Total Democrats . . . . .</i>	<i>27</i>
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Non-Partisans . . . . .	27
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<i>Grand Total . . . . .</i>	<i>437</i>

Thus there were two majorities in the Third Duma: 1) the Rights and the Octobrists=268 out of 437; 2) the Octobrists and Liberals=120+115=235 out of 437. Both majorities were counterrevolutionary.

*Nevskaya Zvezda*, No. 5,  
May 23 (10), 1912

V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*,  
Fourth Russian Edition,  
Vol. XVIII, pp. 28-38

## THE REVOLUTIONARY RISE

The huge May Day strike of the proletariat of all Russia and the accompanying street demonstrations, revolutionary proclamations, and revolutionary speeches to gatherings of workers, have clearly shown that Russia has entered the phase of a rise in the revolution.

This rise has not come as a bolt from the blue. No, the way has been paved for it over a long period of time by all the conditions of Russian life, and the mass strikes in connection with the Lena shootings<sup>55</sup> and May Day only marked its definite arrival. The temporary triumph of the counter-revolution was intimately linked up with a decline in the mass struggle of the workers. The number of strikers gives, although only an approximate, yet an absolutely objective and precise idea of the extent of this struggle.

During the ten years preceding the revolution, from 1895 to 1904, the average number of strikers was 43,000 per annum (in round figures); in 1905—2,750,000, in 1906—1,000,000, in 1907—750,000. The three years of the revolution were marked by a rise in the strike movement of the proletariat *unparalleled anywhere in the world*. Its decline, which began in 1906 and 1907, became definite in 1908, when there were 175,000 strikers. The *coup d'état* of June 3, 1907, which restored the autocratic rule of the tsar in alliance with the Duma of the Black-Hundred landlords and commercial and industrial magnates, was the inevitable result of the flagging of the revolutionary energy of the masses.



The three years 1908-10 were the period of the high tide of the Black-Hundred counterrevolution, of liberal bourgeois renegacy and of proletarian despondency and disintegration. The number of strikers steadily dropped, reaching 60,000 in 1909 and 50,000 in 1910.

However, a marked change set in at the end of 1910. The demonstrations in connection with the death of Muromtsev, the liberal, and of Leo Tolstoy, and also the student movement, clearly indicated that a fresh breeze had begun to blow, that a change had taken place in the mood of the democratic masses. The year 1911 witnessed a gradual switching over on the part of the worker masses to an *offensive*: the number of strikers rose to 100,000. Signs from various quarters indicated that the fatigue, the stupor generated by the triumph of the counterrevolution, was passing away, that once again *the tendency was* towards revolution. In summing up the situation, the All-Russian Conference of the R.S.D.L.P. held in January 1912 stated: "The commencement of a political revival is to be observed among wide sections of the democracy and, above all, among the proletariat. The workers' strikes in 1910-11, the beginning of demonstrations and proletarian mass meetings, the beginning of a movement among the urban bourgeois democrats (student strikes), etc.—are all manifestations of the growing revolutionary sentiments among the masses against the Third-of-June regime." (See the "Announcement" of the Conference, p. 18.)\*

By the second quarter of this year these sentiments had become so pronounced that they manifested themselves in actions on the part of the masses, and created a *revolutionary rise*. The course of events during the past year and a half shows with perfect clarity that there is nothing accidental in this rise, that its advent is quite natural, that it is an

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\* See Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. XVII, p. 418.—Ed

inevitability conditioned by the whole of Russia's previous development.

The Lena shootings served as the event which transformed the revolutionary temper of the masses into a revolutionary upsurge of the masses. Nothing is more false than the liberal invention, which is repeated after the Liquidators by Trotsky in the Vienna *Pravda*, that "the struggle for the freedom of association is the *basis* of both the Lena tragedy and the powerful response it evoked in the country." Freedom of association was neither the specific nor the principal demand in the Lena strike. It was not the lack of the freedom of association that the Lena shootings revealed, but the lack of freedom . . . from provocation, the lack of rights in general, the lack of freedom from wholesale tyranny.

The Lena shootings, as we have already made clear in the *Sotsial-Demokrat*, No. 26, were an exact reflection of the *entire* regime of the Third-of-June monarchy. It was not the struggle for one of the *rights* of the proletariat—even though one of the cardinal, one of the most important rights—that was characteristic of the Lena events. What was characteristic of these events was the complete absence of elementary regard for law of *any* kind. The characteristic feature was that an agent provocateur, a spy, an Okhrana agent, a menial of the tsar, resorted to mass shootings without any political reason whatever. It is precisely this general absence of rights in Russian life, it is precisely the hopelessness and impossibility of waging a struggle for particular *rights*, precisely this incorrigibility of the tsarist monarchy and of its entire regime, that stood out so clearly against the background of the Lena events that they *fired* the masses with *revolutionary* ardour.

The liberals have been straining every nerve to represent the Lena events and the May Day strikes as a trade union movement and a struggle for "rights." But to everyone who is not blinded by the liberal (and Liquidatorist)

controversies, something different is obvious. What is obvious is the *revolutionary* character of the mass strike, especially emphasized by the St. Petersburg May Day proclamation, issued by various groups of Social-Democrats (and even by one group of Socialist-Revolutionary workers!), which we reprint in full in our news section, and which repeats the slogans advanced by the All-Russian Conference of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party in January 1912.

For that matter, it is not even the slogans so much that provide the main corroboration of the revolutionary character of the strikes in connection with the Lena events and May Day. The slogans *formulate* what the facts show. The mass strikes spreading from district to district, their enormous growth, the rapidity with which they spread, the boldness of the workers, the greater frequency of mass meetings and revolutionary speeches, the demand to cancel the fines imposed for celebrating May Day, the combination of the political and the economic strike, familiar to us from the time of the first Russian revolution—all these are facts that clearly indicate the true character of the movement, namely, that it is *a revolutionary rise of the masses*.

Let us recall the experience of 1905. Events show that the *tradition* of the revolutionary mass strike is *alive* among the workers and that the workers at once took up and revived this tradition. The strike wave of 1905, unparalleled in the world, combining the economic and political strike, involved 810,000 strikers during the first, and 1,277,000 during the last quarter of the year. According to approximate estimates, the strikes in connection with the Lena events involved some 300,000 workers, the May Day strikes—400,000, and the strike movement still continues to grow. Every fresh issue of the newspapers—even of the liberal newspapers—reports how the strike conflagration is spreading. The second quarter of 1912 is not quite over, yet even

now we have definite indications of the fact that, as regards the magnitude of the strike movement, the beginning of the revolutionary rise in 1912 is *not lower but, if anything, higher* than the corresponding beginning in 1905!

The Russian revolution was the first to develop on a large scale this proletarian method of agitation, of rousing and consolidating the masses and of drawing them into the struggle. Now the proletariat is applying this method once again and with an even firmer hand. No power on earth could achieve what the revolutionary vanguard of the proletariat is achieving by this method. A huge country, with a population of 150,000,000 spread over a vast area, scattered, oppressed, deprived of all rights, ignorant, fenced off from "evil influences" by a swarm of authorities, police, spies—the *whole* of this country is beginning to get into a ferment. The most backward strata both of the workers and of the peasants are coming into direct or indirect contact with the strikers. Hundreds of thousands of revolutionary agitators are at once appearing on the scene. Their influence is infinitely increased by the fact that they are indissolubly connected with the rank and file, with the masses, they remain in their ranks, fight for the most urgent needs of *every* worker's family, combine with this immediate struggle for the vital daily economic needs political protest and struggle against the monarchy. For counterrevolution has roused in millions and tens of millions of people a bitter hatred for the monarchy, it has given them the rudiments of an understanding of the part played by it, and now the slogan of the advanced workers of the capital—Long live the democratic republic!—is making constant headway, spreading through thousands of channels, in the wake of every strike, reaching the backward strata, the remotest places, the "people," "the depths of Russia."

Highly characteristic is the disquisition on strikes by the liberal, Severyanin, which was welcomed by the *Russkiye Vedomosti* and approvingly reprinted in the *Rech*:

"Have the workers any grounds for adding economic or any (!) demands to the May Day strike?" asks Mr. Severyanin; and he answers: "I make bold to think that they have none. Every economic strike can and must be begun only after a serious consideration of its chances of success. . . . That is why more often than not it is unreasonable to connect such strikes with May Day. . . . It would be even rather strange to do so: Here you are celebrating the international workers' holiday, and you take the occasion to demand a ten per cent raise on calico of such and such grades."

This is how the liberal reasons! And this piece of unexampled vulgarity, meanness and vileness is approvingly accepted by the "best" liberal papers which claim to be democratic!

The coarsest greediness of a bourgeois, the vilest cowardice of a counterrevolutionary—that is what is concealed behind the florid phrases of the liberal. He wants to safeguard the pockets of the employers. He wants an "orderly," "harmless" demonstration in favour of the "right of association"! But instead of this the proletariat is drawing the masses into a *revolutionary* strike, which indissolubly links up politics with economics, a strike which attracts the most backward strata by the success of the struggle for an immediate improvement in the workers' standard of life, and which, at the same time, rouses the people *against the tsarist monarchy*.

Yes, the experience of 1905 created a deep-rooted and great tradition of mass strikes. And it must not be forgotten to what these strikes lead in Russia. In our country stubborn mass strikes are indissolubly bound up with *armed insurrection*.

Let these words not be misinterpreted. It is by no means a question of a *call* for an uprising. Such a call would be most unwise at this juncture. It is a question of establishing the *connection* between strike movements and insurrection in Russia.

How did the uprising *grow* in 1905? In the first place, mass strikes, demonstrations and meetings caused clashes

between the populace and the police and troops to become more frequent. Secondly, the mass strikes roused the peasantry to a number of partial, sporadic, semispontaneous uprisings. Thirdly, the mass strikes very rapidly spread to the army and navy, causing clashes on economic grounds (the "bean" and similar "mutinies") and, subsequently, insurrections. Fourthly, the counterrevolutionary forces *themselves* started civil war by pogroms, the beating up of democrats, etc.

The revolution of 1905 resulted in defeat not because it went "too far," or because the December uprising was "artificial"—the view held by the renegades among the liberals, etc. On the contrary, the cause of the defeat was that the uprising did not go *far enough*, that the consciousness of its necessity was not sufficiently widespread and was not thoroughly assimilated by the revolutionary classes, that the uprising was not concerted, determined, organized, simultaneous, aggressive.

Let us now see whether signs of a *gathering uprising* can be observed at the present time. In order not to be carried away by revolutionary enthusiasm, let us take the testimony of the *Octobrists*. The German Union of Octobrists in St. Petersburg consists mainly of so-called "Left" and "constitutional" Octobrists, who are particularly popular among the Cadets, and who are most capable (in comparison with the other Octobrists and Cadets) of observing events "objectively," without making it their aim to frighten the authorities with the prospect of revolution.

The *St.-Petersburger Zeitung*, the organ of these Octobrists, wrote the following in its weekly political review of May 6 (19):

"May has come. Regardless of the weather, this is usually not a very pleasant month for the inhabitants of the capital, because it begins with the *proletarian 'holiday.'* This year, with the workers still under the impression of the Lena demonstrations, May Day was particularly dangerous. The atmosphere of the capital, saturated with

all sorts of rumours about strikes and demonstrations, portended a conflagration. Our trusty police were perceptibly agitated; they organized searches, arrested some persons and held in readiness large posses to prevent street demonstrations. The fact that the police struck on nothing more clever than to raid the offices of the workers' papers and arrest their editors does not testify to a particularly profound understanding of the wires by which the puppet regiments of the workers are brought into motion. Yet such wires exist. This is borne out by the disciplined character of the strike and by many other circumstances. That is why this May Day strike, the biggest of all we have witnessed so far, is so ominous—some 100,000 or perhaps even 150,000 workers of big and small workshops struck. It was only a peaceful parade, but the solidarity of this army was noteworthy. All the more so since other alarming events took place parallel with the recent excitement among the workers. On various naval vessels, *sailors* were arrested for conducting revolutionary propaganda. Judging by all the information which has found its way into the press, the situation on our naval vessels, which are not numerous as it is, is not very good. . . . The *railwaymen* are also giving cause for disquieting thoughts. Nowhere, it is true, did things reach the stage of even an attempt to organize a strike, but arrests, including such a significant case as the arrest of A. A. Ushakov, an assistant station master on the Nikolayevskaya Railway, show that a certain danger lurks there, too.

"The revolutionary attempts of immature worker masses can, of course, have only a harmful effect on the outcome of the forthcoming Duma elections. These attempts are the more unreasonable . . . in view of the appointment of Manukhin by the tsar . . . and the passing of the workers' insurance bill by the State Council. . . ."

Those are the reflections of a German Octobrist. We, on our part, must remark that we have received precise first-hand information about the sailors, and this information proves that the matter has been exaggerated and inflated by the *Novoye Vremya*. The Okhrana is obviously "working" by frame-up methods. Premature attempts at an uprising would be utterly unwise. The working-class vanguard must understand that the principal requisite for a timely, i.e., victorious, armed uprising in Russia is the support of the working class by the democratic peasantry and the active participation of the army.

Mass strikes in revolutionary epochs have their objective logic. They scatter hundreds of thousands and millions of sparks in all directions—and all around there is inflammable material resulting from extreme bitterness, unprecedented starvation, boundless tyranny, shameless and cynical mockery at the “pauper,” the “muzhik,” the private soldier. Add to this the unbridled Jew-baiting and incitement to pogroms carried on by the Black Hundreds and stealthily fostered and directed by the Court gang of the dull-witted and bloodthirsty Nicholas Romanov. . . . “So it was, so it will be”<sup>56</sup>—these revealing words uttered by the Minister Makarov will rebound to his own doom, to the doom of his class and his landlord tsar!

The revolutionary upsurge of the masses imposes great and responsible duties on every Social-Democratic worker, on every honest democrat. “Every possible support to the incipient movement of the masses” (now we should say: the *already launched revolutionary* movement of the masses), “which must be expanded on the basis of the slogans of the Party fully applied”—this is how the All-Russian Conference of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party defined these duties. The Party slogans—a democratic republic, the eight-hour day, the confiscation of all the landed estates—must become the slogans of the *entire* democracy, the slogans of the *people’s* revolution.

In order to support and extend the movement of the masses, we need *organization and more organization*. Without an illegal Party it is impossible to conduct this work, and it is quite useless engaging in idle talk about it. In supporting and extending the onslaught of the masses we must carefully take into account the experience of 1905, and while explaining the need for and inevitability of an uprising, we must warn against and put a restraining hand upon *premature* attempts. The growth of mass strikes, the enlistment of other classes in the struggle, the state of the organizations, the temper of the masses—all this will of it-



self indicate the moment for all forces to unite in a concerted, determined, aggressive, supremely bold onslaught of the revolution upon the tsarist monarchy.

Without a victorious revolution there will be no freedom in Russia.

Without the overthrow of the tsarist monarchy by a proletarian and peasant uprising, there will be no victorious revolution in Russia.

*Sotsial-Demokrat*, No. 27,  
June 17 (4), 1912

V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*,  
Fourth Russian Edition,  
Vol. XVIII, pp. 85-92

## TWO UTOPIAS

Utopia is a Greek word, composed of "u" meaning "no" and "topos" meaning "place." Utopia means no place; it is a fantasy or invention, a place in Fairyland.

In politics utopia is a wish that can never come true, neither now nor hereafter—a wish that is not based on social forces and that derives no strength from the growth and the development of political, class forces.

The less freedom there is in a country, the scantier the manifestations of open class struggle and the lower the standard of enlightenment of the *masses*, the more easily will political utopias usually arise and the longer will they persist.

In contemporary Russia two kinds of political utopias have persisted most and, because of their attractiveness, have exerted a certain influence over the masses. These are the liberal utopia and the Narodnik utopia.

The liberal utopia consists in the belief that it is possible to secure any at all serious improvements in Russia, in its political liberty and in the position of the working people, peacefully and harmoniously, without offending anyone, without removing the Purishkeviches, without ruthless class struggle fought to a finish. This is the utopia of *peace* between a free Russia and the Purishkeviches.

The Narodnik utopia is a dream of the Narodnik intellectuals and the Trudovik peasants who conceive it possible that a new and just division of the land can *abolish* the power and rule of capital and do away with wage slavery,

or who imagine that a "just," "equalitarian" division of the land can be *maintained* under the domination of capital, under the rule of money, under commodity production.

What engenders these utopias and why their fairly strong persistence in contemporary Russia?

They are engendered by the interests of the classes which are waging a struggle against the old order, serfdom, disfranchisement—in a word, which "fight the Purishkeviches" and which do not occupy an independent position in this struggle. Utopias, daydreaming are engendered by this non-independence, this *weakness*. Daydreaming is the lot of the *weak*.

The liberal bourgeoisie in general and the liberal-bourgeois intelligentsia in particular cannot but aspire to liberty and a reign of law, because without these the domination of the bourgeoisie is not complete, is not undivided, not guaranteed. But the bourgeoisie is *more* afraid of the movement of the masses than of reaction. Hence, the striking, incredible *weakness* of the liberals in politics, their absolute impotence. Hence the endless equivocations and falsehoods, hypocrisy and cowardly evasion in the entire policy of the liberals, who *must* play at democratism to get the masses on their side but who at the same time are profoundly anti-democratic, profoundly hostile to the movement of the masses, to their initiative, their way of "storming heaven,"<sup>57</sup> as Marx once expressed himself with regard to one of the mass movements in Europe in the last century.

The utopia of liberalism is a utopia of impotence in the matter of the political emancipation of Russia, a utopia of the self-interested moneybags who want "peacefully" to share the privileges with the Purishkeviches and pass off this noble desire as the theory of the "peaceful" victory of Russian democracy. Liberal utopianism means daydreaming about how to beat the Purishkeviches without inflicting defeat upon them, how to break them without hurting them. Clearly *such* a utopia is harmful not only because it is a

utopia but also because it *corrupts* the democratic consciousness of the masses. Masses that believe in *this* utopia will never attain liberty; such masses are not worthy of liberty; such masses fully deserve to be made the laughing stock of the Purishkeviches.

The utopia of the Narodniks and Trudoviks is the daydreaming of the petty proprietor, who stands midway between the capitalist and the wage worker, about abolishing wage slavery without a class struggle. When the question of economic emancipation will be as proximate, as immediate, as *urgent* for Russia as the question of political emancipation is today, the utopia of the Narodniks will prove *no less* harmful than the utopia of the liberals.

But Russia is today still in the period of her bourgeois and not her proletarian transformation; it is not the question of the economic emancipation of the proletariat that has become *supremely* mature, but the question of political emancipation, i.e., (at bottom) the question of complete bourgeois liberty.

And in the latter question the utopia of the Narodniks plays a peculiar historical role. This utopia, which is such with regard to the economic consequence that ought (and would) follow upon a new division of the land, is a concomitant and *symptom* of the great, mass *democratic* upsurge of the peasant masses, i.e., the masses that constitute the *majority* of the population in bourgeois-feudal, contemporary Russia. (In a purely bourgeois Russia, as in purely bourgeois Europe, the peasantry will not form the majority of the population.)

The utopia of the liberals corrupts the democratic consciousness of the masses. The utopia of the Narodniks, while corrupting their *socialist* consciousness, is a concomitant, a symptom, and to a certain extent even an expression of their democratic upsurge.

The dialectics of history is such that the Narodniks and the Trudoviks propose and advocate as an anticapitalist remedy a thoroughgoing capitalist measure of maximum con-

sistency with regard to the agrarian question in Russia. An "equalitarian" new division of the land is utopian, but the completest possible rupture, so necessary for a *new* division, with all the old forms of landownership—the landlord, the allotment and the "government" forms of ownership—is the most necessary, economically most progressive and, for a state like Russia, most urgent measure in the direction of bourgeois democracy.

Let us recall here Engels' admirable dictum:

"What formally may be economically incorrect, may all the same be correct from the point of view of world history."

Engels laid down this profound proposition in reference to utopian Socialism: formally this Socialism was economically "incorrect." This Socialism was "incorrect" when it declared that surplus value was an *injustice* from the point of view of the laws of exchange. As against *this* Socialism the theoreticians of bourgeois political economy were formally right, from the point of view of economics, for the surplus value is derived from the laws of exchange quite "naturally," quite "justly."

But utopian Socialism was *right* from the point of view of world history, as it was a symptom, an expression, a herald of the class which, born of capitalism, has by now, the beginning of the twentieth century, become a mass force capable of putting an end to capitalism and irresistibly proceeding in that direction.

Engels' profound proposition must be borne in mind when evaluating the present-day Narodnik or Trudovik utopia in Russia (and perhaps not only in Russia but in a whole number of Asiatic countries that are going through bourgeois revolutions in the twentieth century).

Narodnik *democracy*, which is incorrect from the formal economic point of view, is a verity from the *historical* point of view; *this* democracy, while incorrect in its quality of a socialist utopia, is a *verity* of that peculiar, historically

conditioned democratic struggle of the peasant masses which is an inseparable element of the bourgeois transformation and a condition of its complete victory.

The liberal utopia disaccustoms the peasant masses to fighting. The Narodnik utopia expresses their eagerness to fight, but holds out the promise of a million blessings in case of victory while in actual fact this victory will yield them only a hundred. But is it not natural that the millions who are marching to battle, who for ages have lived in unheard-of ignorance, distress and poverty, dirt, abandonment and downtroddenness, should magnify tenfold the fruits of a prospective victory?

The liberal utopia is a veil to cover up the selfish desires of the new exploiters to share in the privileges of the old exploiters. The Narodnik utopia is an expression of the aspiration of the toiling millions of the petty bourgeoisie to make a *clean sweep* of the old, feudal exploiters, and voices the false hope that the new, capitalist exploiters can be removed "at one and the same time."

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Clearly the Marxists, who are opposed to *all and every* utopia, must defend the independence of the class which can fight feudalism *with supreme devotion* for the very reason that it is not "caught" even one-hundredth as much in the vice of property interests as is the bourgeoisie, which makes the latter a halfhearted opponent and oftentimes an ally of the feudals. The peasants are "caught" in the vice of small commodity production; with a favourable conjuncture of historical circumstances they *can* achieve the most complete abolition of feudalism, but they will *always* inevitably, and not accidentally, manifest a certain degree of vacillation between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, between liberalism and Marxism.

Clearly the Marxists must carefully separate from the shell

of the Narodnik utopias the sound and valuable kernel—the sincere, resolute, militant democracy of the peasant masses.

In the old Marxist literature of the 1880's one can find systematic efforts to separate this valuable democratic kernel. Some day historians will study these efforts systematically and trace their connection with what in the first decade of the twentieth century was given the name of "Bolshevism."

Written in October 1912

*Zhizn*, No. 1, 1924

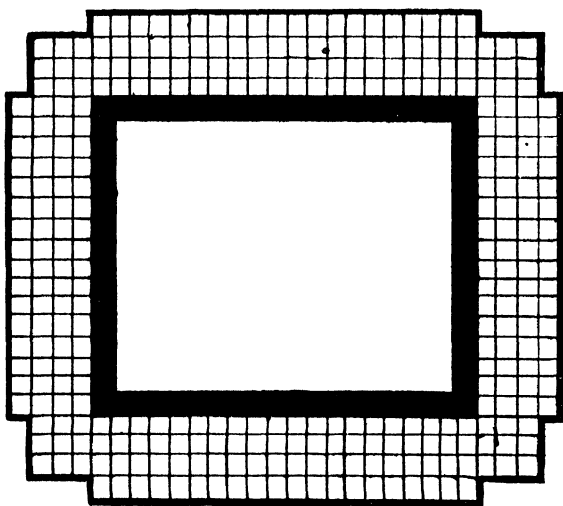
V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*,  
Fourth Russian Edition,  
Vol. XVIII, pp. 326-30

## **BIG LANDLORD AND SMALL PEASANT LANDOWNERSHIP IN RUSSIA**

In connection with the recent anniversary of February 19, 1861,<sup>58</sup> a reminder of the present distribution of land in European Russia will not be inappropriate.

The last official statistics of the distribution of land in European Russia were published by the Ministry of the Interior and relate to 1905.

According to these statistics there were (in round numbers) about 30,000 big landlords, each owning over 500 dessiatines, and between them they owned about 70,000,000 dessiatines.





An *equal area* of land was owned by some 10,000,000 poor peasant households.

On an average, therefore, for each big landlord there are about 330 poor peasant families, and while each peasant family owns 7 (*seven*) dessiatines, each big landlord owns about 2,300 (*two thousand three hundred*) dessiatines.

To make this graphically clear we print the above diagram.

The large white rectangle in the centre represents the estate of a big landlord. The small squares surrounding it represent the small peasant holdings.

In all, there are 324 squares, and the area of the large white rectangle is equivalent to 320 squares.

*Pravda*, No. 51,  
March 15 (2), 1913

V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*,  
Fourth Russian Edition,  
Vol. XVIII, pp. 548-49

## BACKWARD EUROPE AND ADVANCED ASIA

The conjunction of these words seems paradoxical. Who does not know that Europe is advanced and Asia backward? But the words taken for the title for this article contain a bitter truth.

In civilized and advanced Europe, with its brilliantly developed machine industry, its rich all-round culture and its constitution, a historical moment has been reached when the commanding bourgeoisie, out of fear for the growth and increasing strength of the proletariat, is supporting everything backward, moribund and medieval. The obsolescent bourgeoisie is combining with all obsolete and obsolescent forces in an endeavour to preserve tottering wage slavery.

Advanced Europe is commanded by a bourgeoisie which supports everything backward. In our day Europe is advanced not *thanks to*, but *in spite of* the bourgeoisie, for the proletariat alone is adding to the million-strong army of fighters for a better future, it alone is preserving and propagating implacable enmity towards backwardness, savagery, privilege, slavery and the humiliation of man by man.

In "advanced" Europe, the *sole advanced* class is the proletariat. The living bourgeoisie, on the other hand, is prepared to go to any length of savagery, brutality and crime in order to preserve perishing capitalist slavery.

And a more striking example of this decay of the *entire* European bourgeoisie can scarcely be cited than the sup-

port it is lending to *reaction* in Asia for the sake of the selfish aims of the financial manipulators and capitalist swindlers.

Everywhere in Asia a mighty democratic movement is growing, spreading and gaining in strength. There the bourgeoisie is *still* siding with the people against reaction. *Hundreds* of millions of people are awakening to life, light and liberty. What delight this world movement is arousing in the hearts of all class-conscious workers, who know that the path to collectivism lies through democracy! What sympathy for young Asia imbues all honest democrats!

And "advanced" Europe? It is plundering China and helping the foes of democracy, the foes of liberty in China!

Here is a simple but instructive little calculation. The new Chinese loan has been concluded *against* Chinese democracy: "Europe" is *for* Yuan Shih-kai, who is preparing a military dictatorship. Why is it for him? Because of a profitable little deal. The loan has been concluded for a sum of about 250,000,000 rubles, at the rate of 84 per 100. That means that the bourgeois of "Europe" will *pay* the Chinese 210,000,000 rubles, but will take from the public 225,000,000 rubles. There you have at one stroke a pure profit of *fifteen million rubles* in a few weeks! "*Pure*" profit, indeed, is it not?

But what if the Chinese people do not recognize the loan? China, after all, is a republic, and the majority in parliament are *against* the loan.

Oh, then "advanced" Europe will cry "civilization," "order," "culture" and "country"! Then it will set the *guns* in motion and crush the republic of "backward" Asia, in alliance with the adventurer, traitor and friend of reaction, Yuan Shih-kai!

All commanding Europe, all the European bourgeoisie is *in alliance* with all the forces of reaction and medievalism in China.

But on the other hand, all young Asia, that is, the hundreds of millions of toilers in Asia, have a reliable ally in the proletariat of all the civilized countries. No force on earth can prevent its victory, which will liberate both the peoples of Europe and the peoples of Asia.

*Pravda*, No. 113,  
May 31 (18), 1913

V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*,  
Fourth Russian Edition,  
Vol. XIX, pp. 77-78

## THE RIGHT OF NATIONS TO SELF-DETERMINATION

Point 9 of the program of the Russian Marxists, which deals with the right of nations to self-determination, has of late given rise (as we have already pointed out in *Prosveshcheniye*)\* to a regular crusade of the opportunists. The Russian Liquidator Semkovsky in the St. Petersburg Liquidatorist newspaper, the Bundist Liebman and the Ukrainian Social-Nationalist Yurkevich have sharply attacked this point in their respective journals and have treated it with an air of supreme contempt. There is no doubt that this "twelve languages invasion" of opportunism into our Marxian program is closely connected with present-day nationalistic vacillations in general. Hence a detailed analysis of this question seems to us timely. We shall only observe that none of the above-mentioned opportunists has adduced a single independent argument; all of them merely repeat what was said by Rosa Luxemburg<sup>59</sup> in her long Polish article of 1908-09, "The National Question and Autonomy." In our exposition we shall deal mainly with the "original" arguments of this last-named author.

### 1. WHAT IS SELF-DETERMINATION OF NATIONS?

Naturally, this is the first question to arise when any attempt is made to examine in a Marxist way what is known as self-determination. What should be understood by that term? Should we seek for an answer in legal definitions de-

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\* See Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. XX, pp. 1-34.—*Ed.*

duced from all sorts of "general concepts" of law? Or should we seek an answer in the historical and economic study of the national movements?

It is not surprising that Messrs. the Semkovskys, Liebman and Yurkeviches did not even think of raising this question, limiting themselves merely to sneering about the "obscurity" of the Marxist program, apparently not knowing in their simplicity that self-determination of nations is dealt with not only in the Russian program of 1903, but also in the resolution of the London International Congress of 1896 (with which I shall deal in detail in the proper place). Much more surprising is the fact that Rosa Luxemburg, who declaims a great deal about the alleged abstract and metaphysical nature of the point in question should herself succumb to the sin of abstraction and metaphysics. It is Rosa Luxemburg herself who is continually straying into generalities about self-determination (including the very amusing disquisition on the question of how the will of the nation is to be ascertained), without anywhere clearly and precisely asking herself whether the crux of the issue lies in juridical definitions or in the experience of the national movements throughout the world.

A precise formulation of this question, which a Marxist cannot avoid, would at once have undermined nine-tenths of Rosa Luxemburg's arguments. This is not the first time national movements have arisen in Russia, nor are they peculiar to that country alone. Throughout the world, the period of the final victory of capitalism over feudalism has been linked up with national movements. The economic basis of these movements is the fact that in order to achieve complete victory for commodity production the bourgeoisie must capture the home market, must have politically united territories with a population speaking the same language, and all obstacles to the development of this language and to its consolidation in literature must be removed. Language is the most important means of human intercourse. Unity of language

and its unimpeded development is one of the most important conditions for genuinely free and extensive commercial intercourse on a scale commensurate with modern capitalism, for a free and broad grouping of the population in all its separate classes and, lastly, for the establishment of close connection between the market and each and every proprietor, big or little, seller and buyer.

Therefore, the tendency of every national movement is towards the formation of *national states*, under which these requirements of modern capitalism are best satisfied. The profoundest economic factors drive towards this goal, and therefore, for the whole of Western Europe, nay, for the entire civilized world, the *typical*, normal state for the capitalist period is the national state.

Consequently, if we want to grasp the meaning of self-determination of nations not by juggling with legal definitions, or "inventing" abstract definitions, but by examining the historical and economic conditions of the national movements, we shall inevitably reach the conclusion that self-determination of nations means the political separation of these nations from alien national bodies, the formation of an independent national state.

Later on, we shall see still other reasons why it would be incorrect to understand the right to self-determination to mean anything but the right to separate state existence. At present, we must deal with Rosa Luxemburg's efforts to "dismiss" the unavoidable conclusion that the striving to form a national state rests on deep economic foundations.

Rosa Luxemburg is quite familiar with Kautsky's pamphlet *Nationality and Internationality*. (Supplement to *Die Neue Zeit*, No. 1, 1907-08; Russian translation in the magazine *Nauchnaya Mysl*, Riga 1908.) She knows that Kautsky, after carefully analyzing the question of the national state in Chapter Four of that pamphlet, arrived at the conclusion that Otto Bauer "*underestimates* the force of the urge to create a national state" (p. 23). Rosa Luxemburg herself quotes the

following words of Kautsky: "The national state is the form of state that is *most suitable* for present-day conditions" (i.e., capitalist, civilized, economically progressive conditions, as distinguished from medieval, precapitalist, etc.), "it is the form in which it can best fulfil its tasks" (i.e., the task of securing the freest, widest and speediest development of capitalism). To this we must add Kautsky's still more precise concluding remark: heterogeneous nation states (what are called nationality states as distinguished from national states) are "always states whose internal constitution has for some reason or other remained abnormal or underdeveloped" (backward). Needless to say, Kautsky speaks of abnormality exclusively in the sense of lack of conformity with what is best adapted to the requirements of developing capitalism.

The question now is, how did Rosa Luxemburg treat these historical-economic conclusions of Kautsky's? Are they right or wrong? Is Kautsky right in his historical-economic theory, or is Bauer, whose theory is psychological at bottom? What is the connection between Bauer's undoubted "national opportunism," his defence of cultural-national autonomy, his nationalistic infatuation ("here and there an emphasis on the national aspect," as Kautsky put it), his "enormous exaggeration of the national aspect and complete oblivion to the international aspect" (Kautsky)—and his underestimation of the force of the urge to create a national state?

Rosa Luxemburg did not even raise this question. She failed to notice this connection. She did not weigh the *totality* of Bauer's theoretical views. She did not even draw a contrast between the historical-economic and the psychological theory of the national question. She confined herself to the following remarks in criticism of Kautsky:

"This 'best' national state is only an abstraction, which can easily be developed and defended theoretically, but which does not correspond to reality." (*Przegląd Socjaldemokratyczny*,\* 1908. No. 6, p. 499.)

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\* *Social-Democratic Review*.—Tr.



And in corroboration of this bold statement there follow arguments to the effect that the "right to self-determination" of small nations is rendered illusory by the development of the great capitalist powers and by imperialism. "Can one seriously speak," exclaims Rosa Luxemburg, "about the 'self-determination' of the formally independent Montenegrins, Bulgarians, Rumanians, Serbs, Greeks, partly even the Swiss, whose independence is itself a result of the political struggle and the diplomatic game of the 'concert of Europe'?"! (P. 500.) The state that best suits the conditions is "not a national state, as Kautsky believes, but a predatory state." Several dozen figures are quoted relating to the size of British, French and other colonial possessions.

Reading such arguments one cannot help marvelling how the author contrived not to understand *what's what*! To teach Kautsky with a serious mien that small states are economically dependent on big ones, that a struggle is going on between the bourgeois states for the predatory suppression of other nations, that imperialism and colonies exist—saviours of ridiculously childish attempts to be clever, for all this has not the slightest bearing on the subject. Not only small states, but even Russia, for example, is economically entirely dependent on the power of the imperialist finance capital of the "rich" bourgeois countries. Not only the miniature Balkan states, but even America in the nineteenth century was economically a colony of Europe, as Marx pointed out in *Capital*. Kautsky, and every Marxist, is well aware of this, of course, but as regards the question of national movements and the national state this is neither here nor there.

For the question of the political self-determination of nations in bourgeois society, and of their independence as states, Rosa Luxemburg has substituted the question of their economic independence. This is as intelligent as if someone, in discussing the demand in the program for the supremacy of parliament, i.e., the assembly of people's representatives,

in a bourgeois state, were to expound the perfectly correct conviction that big capital dominates no matter what the regime in a bourgeois country.

There is no doubt that the greater part of Asia, the most populous continent, consists either of colonies of the "Great Powers," or of states which are extremely dependent and oppressed as nations. But does this commonly-known circumstance in any way shake the undoubted fact that in Asia itself the conditions for the most complete development of commodity production, for the freest, widest and speediest growth of capitalism, have been created only in Japan, i.e., only in an independent national state? This state is a bourgeois state, therefore, it, itself, has begun to oppress other nations and to enslave colonies. We cannot say whether Asia will have time before the downfall of capitalism to become crystallized into a system of independent national states, like Europe; but it remains an undisputed fact that capitalism, having awakened Asia, has called forth national movements everywhere in that continent, too; that the tendency of these movements is towards the creation of national states in Asia; that the best conditions for the development of capitalism are ensured precisely by such states. The example of Asia speaks *in favour* of Kautsky and *against* Rosa Luxemburg.

The example of the Balkan states likewise speaks against her, for everyone can see now that the best conditions for the development of capitalism in the Balkans are created precisely in proportion to the creation of independent national states in that peninsula.

Therefore, Rosa Luxemburg notwithstanding, the example of the whole of progressive, civilized mankind, the example of the Balkans and the example of Asia prove that Kautsky's proposition is absolutely correct: the national state is the rule and the "norm" of capitalism; the heterogeneous nation state represents backwardness, or is an exception. From the standpoint of national relations, the best condi-

tions for the development of capitalism are undoubtedly provided by the national state. This does not mean, of course, that such a state, based on bourgeois relations, could eliminate the exploitation and oppression of nations. It only means that Marxists cannot lose sight of the powerful *economic* factors that give rise to the striving to create national states. It means that "self-determination of nations" in the program of the Marxists *cannot*, from a historical-economic point of view, have any other meaning than political self-determination, political independence, the formation of a national state.

On what conditions the bourgeois-democratic demand for a "national state" is to be supported from a Marxian, i.e., class proletarian, point of view will be dealt with in detail later on. At present we confine ourselves to the definition of the *concept* "self-determination" and must only note that Rosa Luxemburg *knows* what this concept means ("national state"), whereas her opportunist partisans, the Liebmans, the Semkovskys, the Yurkeviches *do not even know that!*

## 2. THE HISTORICALLY CONCRETE PRESENTATION OF THE QUESTION

The categorical demand of Marxist theory in examining any social question is that the question be examined within *definite* historical limits, and if it refers to a particular country (e.g., the national program for a given country), that due account be taken of the specific features that distinguish that country from others within the same historical epoch.

What does this categorical demand of Marxism imply in application to the question we are discussing?

First of all, it implies that a strict distinction must be drawn between two periods of capitalism, which differ radi-

cally from each other as far as the national movement is concerned. On the one hand, the period of the collapse of feudalism and absolutism, the period of the formation of the bourgeois-democratic society and state, when the national movements for the first time become mass movements and in one way or another draw *all* classes of the population into politics through the press, participation in representative institutions, etc. On the other hand, we have the period of definitely formed capitalist states with a long-established constitutional regime, with a strongly developed antagonism between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie—the period that may be called the eve of the collapse of capitalism.

The typical features of the first period are the awakening of national movements and the drawing of the peasants, the most numerous and the most “sluggish” section of the population, into these movements, in connection with the struggle for political liberty in general and for national rights in particular. The typical features of the second period are the absence of mass bourgeois-democratic movements; the fact that developed capitalism, while bringing the nations that have already been fully drawn into commercial intercourse closer together and causing them to intermingle to an increasing degree, brings into the forefront the antagonism between internationally united capital and the international working-class movement.

Of course, no wall separates the two periods; they are connected by numerous transitional links, and the various countries differ from each other in the rapidity of their national development, in national composition and distribution of their population, and so forth. There can be no question of the Marxists of a given country drawing up their national program without taking into account all these general historical and concrete state conditions.

And it is just here that we come up against the weakest point in the arguments of Rosa Luxemburg. With extraordinary zeal she embellishes her article with a collection of

“strong” words against point 9 of our program, declaring it to be “sweeping,” “a platitude,” “a metaphysical phrase,” and so on without end. It would be natural to expect that an author who so magnificently condemns metaphysics (in the Marxist sense, i.e., antidialectics) and empty abstractions would set us an example of how to make a concrete historical analysis of the question. We are discussing the national program of the Marxists of a definite country—Russia, in a definite period—the beginning of the twentieth century. But does Rosa Luxemburg raise the question as to *what historical* period Russia is passing through, as to *what are the concrete* features of the national question and the national movements of that *particular* country in that *particular* period?

*No! She says absolutely nothing about it!* In her work you will not find even the shadow of an analysis of how the national question stands in *Russia* in the present historical period, or of the specific features of *Russia* in this particular respect!

We are told that the national question stands differently in the Balkans than in Ireland; that Marx appraised the Polish and Czech national movements in the concrete conditions of 1848 in this way (a page of excerpts from Marx); that Engels appraised the struggle of the forest cantons of Switzerland against Austria and the battle of Morgarten which took place in 1315 in that way (a page of quotations from Engels with the appropriate comments from Kautsky); that Lassalle regarded the peasant war in Germany of the sixteenth century as reactionary, etc.

It cannot be said that these remarks and quotations are distinguished for their novelty, but, at all events, it is interesting for the reader to recall again and again precisely how Marx, Engels and Lassalle approached the analysis of concrete historical questions in individual countries. And a perusal of these instructive quotations from Marx and Engels reveals most strikingly the ridiculous position Rosa Luxemburg has placed herself in. Eloquently and angrily she preaches

the need for a concrete historical analysis of the national question in various countries at various periods; but she makes not the *slightest* attempt to determine through *what* historical stage in the development of capitalism *Russia* is passing at the beginning of the twentieth century or what are the *specific features* of the national question in this country. Rosa Luxemburg gives examples of how *others* have treated the question in a Marxist fashion, as if deliberately stressing how often good intentions pave the road to hell, how often good counsels cover up unwillingness or inability to follow these counsels in practice.

Here is one of her edifying comparisons. In protesting against the demand for the independence of Poland, Rosa Luxemburg refers to her work of 1898, in which she proved the rapid "industrial development of Poland" which sold her manufactured goods in Russia. Needless to say, no conclusion whatever can be drawn from this on the question of the *right* to self-determination; it only proves the disappearance of the old, squire-ridden Poland, etc. But Rosa Luxemburg always imperceptibly passes on to the conclusion that among the factors that unite Russia and Poland, the purely economic factors of modern capitalist relations now predominate.

Then our Rosa proceeds to the question of autonomy, and though her article is entitled "The National Question and Autonomy," *in general*, she begins to argue that the Kingdom of Poland has an *exclusive* right to autonomy (see *Prosveshcheniye*, 1913, No. 12\*). In order to support the right of Poland to autonomy, Rosa Luxemburg evidently judges the state system of Russia by its economic and political and sociological characteristics and everyday life—a totality of traits which, taken together, produce the concept "Asiatic despotism." (*Przeglad*, No. 12, p. 137.)

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\* See Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. XX, pp. 28-34.—*Ed.*

It is generally known that a state system of that type possesses very great stability in those cases where completely patriarchal precapitalist traits are predominant in the economic system and where commodity production and class differentiation are hardly developed. If, however, in a country where the state system bears a very distinct *precapitalist* character, there is a nationally delimited region where capitalism is *rapidly* developing, then the more rapidly that capitalism develops, the greater will be the antagonism between it and the *precapitalist* state system, and the more likely will be the separation of the more progressive region from the whole—with which it is connected not by “modern capitalistic,” but by “Asiatic-despotic” ties.

Thus, Rosa Luxemburg’s reasoning is faulty even on the question of the social structure of the government in Russia in relation to bourgeois Poland; and as for the question of the concrete, historical, specific features of the national movements in Russia—she does not even raise it.

And on this question we must now dwell.

### 3. THE CONCRETE SPECIFIC FEATURES OF THE NATIONAL QUESTION IN RUSSIA AND RUSSIA’S BOURGEOIS-DEMOCRATIC REFORMATION

“In spite of the elasticity of the principle of ‘the right of nations to self-determination,’ which is a mere platitude, being, obviously, equally applicable not only to the nations inhabiting Russia, but also to the nations inhabiting Germany and Austria, Switzerland and Sweden, America and Australia, we do not find it in the programs of any of the present-day socialist parties. . . .” (*Przeglad*, No. 6, p. 483.)

This is what Rosa Luxemburg writes at the beginning of her crusade against point 9 of the Marxists’ program. In trying to foist on us the conception of this point in the program as a “mere platitude” Rosa Luxemburg herself falls victim to

this error, alleging with amusing audacity that this point is "obviously, equally applicable" to Russia, Germany, etc.

Obviously, we reply, Rosa Luxemburg decided to make her article a collection of errors in logic suitable for school-boy exercises. For Rosa Luxemburg's tirade is absolute nonsense and a mockery of the historically concrete presentation of the question.

Interpreting the Marxist program in a Marxist and not in a childish way, it is not at all difficult to surmise that it refers to bourgeois-democratic national movements. If that is the case, and it undoubtedly is the case, it is "obvious" that this program "sweepingly," as a "platitude," etc., refers to *all* instances of bourgeois-democratic national movements. And had Rosa Luxemburg given the slightest thought to this, the conclusion would have been no less obvious to her, too, that our program refers *only* to cases where such a movement is actually in existence.

Had she pondered over these obvious considerations, Rosa Luxemburg would have easily perceived what nonsense she was uttering. In accusing *us* of uttering a "platitude" she uses *against us* the argument that no mention is made of the right to self-determination in the programs of those countries where there are *no* bourgeois-democratic national movements! A remarkably clever argument!

A comparison of the political and economic development of various countries as well as of their Marxist programs is of enormous importance from the standpoint of Marxism, for there can be no doubt that all modern states are of a common capitalist nature and are subject to a common law of development. But such a comparison must be drawn in a sensible way. The elementary condition required for this is the elucidation of the question of whether the historical periods of the development of the countries compared are at all *comparable*. For instance, only absolute ignoramuses (such as Prince E. Trubetskoy in the *Russkaya Mysl*) are capable of "comparing" the agrarian program of the Russian Marxists



with those of Western Europe, for our program answers the question regarding a *bourgeois-democratic* agrarian reformation, whereas in the western countries no such question exists.

The same applies to the national question. In most Western countries it has been settled long ago. It is ridiculous to seek in the programs of Western Europe for an answer to non-existent questions. Rosa Luxemburg has lost sight of the most important thing here, viz., the difference between countries where the bourgeois-democratic reformation has long been completed and those where it has not yet been completed.

This difference is the crux of the matter. Her complete disregard of this difference transforms Rosa Luxemburg's exceedingly long article into a collection of empty, meaningless platitudes.

In Western, continental Europe, the epoch of the bourgeois-democratic revolutions embraces a fairly definite period, approximately from 1789 to 1871. This was precisely the period of national movements and the creation of national states. When this period drew to a close Western Europe had been transformed into a settled system of bourgeois states, which, as a general rule, were national uniform states. Therefore, to seek the right of self-determination in the programs of present-day West-European Socialists is to betray one's ignorance of the ABC of Marxism.

In Eastern Europe and in Asia the period of bourgeois-democratic revolutions only began in 1905. The revolutions in Russia, Persia, Turkey and China, the wars in the Balkans, such is the chain of world events of *our* period in our "Orient." And only the blind can fail to see in this chain of events the awakening of a *whole series* of bourgeois-democratic national movements, striving to create nationally independent and nationally uniform states. It is precisely and solely because Russia and the neighbouring countries are passing through this period that we require a clause in our program on the right of nations to self-determination.

But let us continue the quotation from Rosa Luxemburg's article a little further. She writes:

"In particular, the program of a party which is operating in a state with an extremely mixed national composition and for which the national question is a matter of first-rate importance—the program of the Austrian Social-Democratic Party—does not contain the principle of the right of nations to self-determination." (*Ibid.*)

Thus, an attempt is made to convince the reader by the example of Austria "in particular." Let us examine this example in the light of concrete historical facts and see just how sound it is.

In the first place, we raise the fundamental question of the completion of the bourgeois-democratic revolution. In Austria this revolution began in 1848, and was over in 1867. Since then, for nearly half a century, there has prevailed what on the whole is an established bourgeois constitution on the basis of which a legal workers' party is legally functioning.

Therefore, in the inherent conditions of the development of Austria (i.e., from the standpoint of the development of capitalism in Austria in general, and among its separate nations in particular), there are *no* factors that produce leaps, one of the concomitants of which might be the formation of nationally independent states. In assuming by her comparison that Russia is in an analogous position in this respect, Rosa Luxemburg not only makes a fundamentally wrong, antihistorical assumption, but she involuntarily slips into Liquidatorism.

Secondly, the entirely different relations between the nationalities in Austria and in Russia are particularly important for the question we are concerned with. Not only was Austria for a long time a state in which the Germans predominated, but the Austrian Germans laid claim to hegemony in the German nation as a whole. This "claim," as Rosa Luxemburg (who is seemingly so averse to com-

monplaces, platitudes, abstractions . . .) will perhaps be kind enough to remember, was defeated in the war of 1866. The German nation predominating in Austria found itself *outside the pale* of the independent German state which finally took shape in 1871. On the other hand, the attempt of the Hungarians to create an independent national state collapsed as far back as 1849, under the blows of the Russian army of serfs.

A very peculiar situation was thus created: a striving on the part of the Hungarians and then of the Czechs, not for separation from Austria, but, on the contrary, for the preservation of Austria's integrity, precisely in order to preserve national independence, which might have been completely crushed by more rapacious and powerful neighbours! Owing to this peculiar situation, Austria assumed the form of a double centred (dual) state, and is now being transformed into a three-centred (triune) state (Germans, Hungarians, Slavs).

Is there anything like this in Russia? Is there in our country a striving of "alien races" for unity with the Great Russians in face of the danger of *worse* national oppression?

One need only put this question to see that the comparison between Russia and Austria in the question of self-determination of nations is senseless, platitudinous and ignorant.

The peculiar conditions in Russia as regards the national question are just the reverse of those we see in Austria. Russia is a state with a single national centre—Great Russia. The Great Russians occupy a vast, uninterrupted stretch of territory, and number about 70,000,000. The specific features of this national state are, firstly, that "alien races" (which, on the whole, comprise the majority of the entire population—57 per cent) inhabit the border regions. Secondly, the oppression of these alien races is much stronger than in the neighbouring states (and not even in European states alone). Thirdly, in a number of cases the oppressed nation,

alities inhabiting the border regions have compatriots across the border who enjoy greater national independence (suffice it to mention the Finns, the Swedes, the Poles, the Ukrainians and the Rumanians along the western and southern frontiers of the state). Fourthly, the development of capitalism and the general level of culture are often higher in the border regions inhabited by "alien races" than in the centre. Lastly, it is precisely in the neighbouring Asiatic states that we observe incipient bourgeois revolutions and national movements, which partly affect the kindred nationalities within the borders of Russia.

Thus, it is precisely the concrete, historical specific features of the national question in Russia that make the recognition of the right of nations to self-determination in the present period a matter of special urgency in our country.

Incidentally, even from the purely factual aspect, Rosa Luxemburg's assertion that the program of the Austrian Social-Democrats does not contain the recognition of the right of nations to self-determination is incorrect. We need only open the minutes of the Brünn Congress, which adopted the national program, to find the statements by the Ruthenian Social-Democrat Gankevich on behalf of the entire Ukrainian (Ruthenian) delegation (p. 85 of the minutes), and by the Polish Social-Democrat Reger on behalf of the entire Polish delegation (p. 108), to the effect that one of the aspirations of the Austrian Social-Democrats of both the above-mentioned nations is to secure national unity, the freedom and independence of their nations. Hence, Austrian Social-Democracy while not including the right of nations to self-determination directly in its program, nevertheless, allows the demand for national independence to be advanced by *sections* of the party. In reality this means, of course, the recognition of the right of nations to self-determination! Thus, Rosa Luxemburg's reference to Austria speaks *against* Rosa Luxemburg in *all* respects.

#### 4. "PRACTICALNESS" IN THE NATIONAL QUESTION

The opportunists have particularly seized on Rosa Luxemburg's argument that point 9 of our program contains nothing "practical." Rosa Luxemburg is so delighted with this argument that in some parts of her article this "slogan" is repeated eight times on a single page.

She writes: point 9 "gives no practical lead on the day-to-day policy of the proletariat, no practical solution of national problems."

Let us examine this argument, which elsewhere is also formulated in such a way that point 9 is either utterly meaningless, or else commits us to support all national aspirations.

What does the demand for "practicalness" in the national question imply?

Either support for all national aspirations; or the answer "yes" or "no" to the question of secession in the case of every nation; or that national demands are immediately "practicable" in general.

Let us examine all these three possible meanings of the demand for "practicalness."

The bourgeoisie, which naturally comes out as the hegemon (leader) in the beginning of every national movement, terms the support of all national aspirations practical. But the policy of the proletariat in the national question (as in other questions) supports the bourgeoisie only in a definite direction; it never coincides with the policy of the bourgeoisie. The working class supports the bourgeoisie only in order to secure national peace (which the bourgeoisie cannot bring about completely and which can be achieved only with *complete* democracy), in order to secure equal rights and to create the best conditions for the class struggle. Therefore, precisely *against the practicalness* of the bourgeoisie the proletarians advance their *principles* in the national ques-

tion; they always give the bourgeoisie *only conditional* support. In national affairs the bourgeoisie always strives either for privileges for its *own* nation, or exceptional advantages for it; and this is called being "practical." The proletariat is opposed to all privileges, to all exceptionalism. Those who demand that it should be "practical" are trailing in the wake of the bourgeoisie, are falling into opportunism.

The demand for an answer "yes" or "no" to the question of secession in the case of every nation seems to be a very "practical" one. In reality it is absurd; it is metaphysical in theory, and in practice it leads to subordinating the proletariat to the policy of the bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie always places its national demands in the forefront. It advances them categorically. For the proletariat, however, these demands are subordinate to the interests of the class struggle. Theoretically, it is impossible to vouch beforehand whether the secession of a given nation from, or its equality with, another nation, will complete the bourgeois-democratic revolution; *in either case*, the important thing for the proletariat is to ensure the development of its class. For the bourgeoisie it is important to hamper this by pushing the aims of "its" nation before the aims of this development. That is why the proletariat confines itself, so to say, to the negative demand for the recognition of the *right* to self-determination, without giving guarantees to any nation, without undertaking to give *anything at the expense* of another nation.

This may not be "practical," but in reality it is the best guarantee for the achievement of the most democratic of all possible solutions. The proletariat needs *only* these guarantees, whereas the bourgeoisie of every nation requires guarantees for its *own* interests, irrespective of the position of (or the possible disadvantages to) other nations.

The bourgeoisie is most interested in the "practicability" of the given demand—hence the perennial policy of coming to terms with the bourgeoisie of other nations to

the detriment of the proletariat. For the proletariat, however, the important thing is to strengthen its class against the bourgeoisie and to educate the masses in the spirit of consistent democracy and Socialism.

This may not be "practical" for the opportunists, but it is the only real guarantee, the guarantee of a maximum of national equality and peace, in spite of the feudal landlords and the *nationalist* bourgeoisie.

The whole task of the proletarians in the national question is "impractical" from the standpoint of the *nationalist* bourgeoisie of every nation, because, being opposed to all nationalism, the proletarians demand "abstract" equality, they demand that on principle there shall be no privileges, however slight. Failing to grasp this, Rosa Luxemburg, by her unwise eulogy of practicalness, opened the gate wide for the opportunists, and especially for opportunist concessions to Great-Russian nationalism.

Why Great-Russian? Because the Great Russians in Russia are an oppressing nation, and opportunism on the national question will naturally be differently expressed among the oppressed nations than among the oppressing nations.

The bourgeoisie of the oppressed nations will call upon the proletariat to support its aspirations unconditionally on the plea that its demands are "practical." The most practical procedure is to say a plain "yes" in favour of the secession of a *particular* nation than in favour of all nations having the *right* to secede!

The proletariat is opposed to such practicalness. While recognizing equality and an equal right to a national state, it values above all, and places above all, the alliance of the proletarians of all nations, and evaluates every national demand, every national separation, *from the angle* of the class struggle of the workers. This call for practicalness is merely a call for the uncritical acceptance of bourgeois aspirations.

We are told: by supporting the right to secession you are supporting the bourgeois nationalism of the oppressed nations. This is what Rosa Luxemburg says, and it is echoed by Semkovsky, the opportunist, who, by the way, is the only representative of Liquidatorist ideas on this question in the Liquidatorist newspaper!

Our reply to this is: No, a "practical" solution of this question is important precisely for the bourgeoisie. The important thing for the workers is to distinguish the *principles* of two trends. *Inasmuch* as the bourgeoisie of the oppressed nation fights the oppressing one, we are always, in every case, and more resolutely than anyone else, *in favour*; for we are the staunchest and the most consistent enemies of oppression. But *inasmuch* as the bourgeoisie of the oppressed nation stands for *its own* bourgeois nationalism we are opposed. We fight against the privileges and violence of the oppressing nation and do not in any way condone the strivings for privileges on the part of the oppressed nation.

If we do not raise and advocate in our agitation the slogan of the *right* to secession we shall play into the hands, not only of the bourgeoisie, but also of the feudal landlords and the absolutism of the *oppressing* nation. Kautsky long ago advanced this argument against Rosa Luxemburg, and the argument is indisputable. When, in her anxiety not to "assist" the nationalistic bourgeoisie of Poland, Rosa Luxemburg rejects the *right* to secession in the program of the *Russian* Marxists, she is *in fact* assisting the Great-Russian Black Hundreds. She is in fact assisting opportunist resignation to the privileges (and worse than privileges) of the Great Russians.

Carried away by the struggle against nationalism in Poland, Rosa Luxemburg has forgotten the nationalism of the Great Russians, although precisely *this* nationalism is the most formidable at the present time, it is the nationalism that is less bourgeois and more feudal, and pre-



cisely it is the principal obstacle to democracy and to the proletarian struggle. The bourgeois nationalism of *every* oppressed nation has a general democratic content which is directed *against* oppression, and it is this content that we support *unconditionally*, while strictly distinguishing it from the tendency towards national exceptionalism, while fighting against the tendency of the Polish bourgeois to oppress the Jews, etc., etc.

This is "impractical" from the standpoint of the bourgeois and the philistine; but it is the only policy in the national question that is practical, that is based on principles and that really promotes democracy, liberty and proletarian unity.

The recognition of the right to secession for all; the appraisal of each concrete question of secession from the point of view of removing all inequality, all privileges, all exceptionalism.

Let us take the position of an oppressing nation. Can a nation be free if it oppresses other nations? It cannot. The interests of the freedom of the Great-Russian population\* demand a struggle against such oppression. The long, agelong history of the suppression of the movements of the oppressed nations, the systematic propaganda in favour of such suppression on the part of the "upper" classes, have created enormous obstacles to the cause of freedom of the Great-Russian people itself, in the form of prejudices, etc.

The Great-Russian Black Hundreds deliberately foster and fan these prejudices. The Great-Russian bourgeoisie tolerates them or panders to them. The Great-Russian proletariat cannot achieve *its own* aims, cannot clear the

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\* This word appears un-Marxist to a certain L. VI. in Paris. This L. VI. is amusingly "superklug" (overclever). This "overclever" L. VI. apparently proposes to write an essay on the deletion from our minimum program (having in mind the class struggle!) of the words "population," "people," etc.

road to freedom for itself unless it systematically combats these prejudices.

In Russia, the creation of an independent national state so far remains the privilege of the Great-Russian nation alone. We, the Great-Russian proletarians, defend no privileges, and we do not defend this privilege either. In our fight we take the given state as our basis; we unite the workers of all nations in the given state; we cannot vouch for any particular path of national development, we are marching to our class goal by *all* possible paths.

But we cannot advance to that goal unless we combat all nationalism, unless we uphold the equality of the various nations. Whether the Ukraine, for example, is destined to form an independent state is a matter that will be determined by a thousand factors, which cannot be foreseen. Without attempting idle "*guesses*," we firmly uphold what is beyond doubt: the right of the Ukraine to form such a state. We respect this right; we do not uphold the privileges of the Great Russians over the Ukrainians; we *educate* the masses in the spirit of recognition of that right, in the spirit of rejecting the *state* privileges of any nation.

In the leaps which all nations take in the period of bourgeois revolutions, clashes and struggle over the right to a national state are possible and probable. We proletarians declare in advance that we are *opposed* to Great-Russian privileges, and this is what guides our entire propaganda and agitation.

In her quest for "practicalness" Rosa Luxemburg has overlooked the *principal* practical task both of the Great-Russian proletariat and of the proletariat of other nationalities: the task of daily agitation and propaganda against all state and national privileges and for the right, the equal right of all nations to their national state. This task is (at present) our principal task in the national question, for only in this way can we defend the interests

of democracy and the alliance of all proletarians of all nations on an equal footing.

This propaganda may be "unpractical" from the point of view of the Great-Russian oppressors as well as from the point of view of the bourgeoisie of the oppressed nations (both demand a *definite* "yes" or "no" and accuse the Social-Democrats of being "vague"). In reality it is this propaganda, and only this propaganda, that ensures the really democratic, the really socialist education of the masses. Only such propaganda ensures the greatest chances of national peace in Russia, should she remain a heterogeneous national state, and the most peaceful (and for the proletarian class struggle, harmless) division into separate national states, should the question of such a division arise.

To explain this, the only proletarian policy in the national question, more concretely we shall examine the attitude of Great-Russian Liberalism towards the "self-determination of nations," and the example of the secession of Norway from Sweden.

##### 5. THE LIBERAL BOURGEOISIE AND THE SOCIALIST OPPORTUNISTS ON THE NATIONAL QUESTION

We have seen that one of Rosa Luxemburg's "trump cards" in her struggle against the program of the Russian Marxists is the following argument: The recognition of the right to self-determination is tantamount to supporting the bourgeois nationalism of the oppressed nations. On the other hand, she says, if we take this right to mean no more than combating all violence against other nations, there is no need for a special point in the program, for Social-Democrats are, in general, opposed to all national oppression and inequality.

The first argument, as Kautsky irrefutably proved nearly twenty years ago, is a case of blaming other people

for one's own nationalism; for in fearing the nationalism of the bourgeoisie of the oppressed nations, Rosa Luxemburg is *actually* playing into the hands of the Black-Hundred nationalism of the Great Russians! Her second argument is virtually a timid evasion of the question: Does the recognition of national equality include the recognition of the right to secession or not? If it does, then Rosa Luxemburg admits that, in principle, point 9 of our program is correct. If it does not, then she does not recognize national equality. Twists and evasions will not help matters here!

The best way to test the above and all analogous arguments, however, is to study the attitude of the *various classes* of society towards this question. For the Marxist this test is obligatory. We must proceed from the objective; we must examine the relations of the classes on this point. Failing to do this, Rosa Luxemburg is guilty of those very sins of metaphysics, abstractions, platitudes, sweeping statements, etc., of which she vainly accuses her opponents.

We are discussing the program of the Marxists in *Russia*, i.e., of the Marxists of all the nationalities in Russia. Should we not examine the position of the *ruling classes* of Russia?

The position of the "bureaucracy" (we beg to be excused for this inexact term) and of the feudal landlords of the type of our United Nobility is well known. They categorically reject both equality of nationalities and the right to self-determination. They adhere to the old motto of the days of serfdom: autocracy, orthodoxy, nationality—the last term applying only to the Great-Russian nation. Even the Ukrainians have been proclaimed "aliens," and even their language is being suppressed.

Let us glance at the Russian bourgeoisie, which was "called" to take part—a very modest part, it is true, but nevertheless some part—in the government, under the

"June Third" legislative and administrative system. There is no need to dilate on the fact that the Octobrists are really following the Rights in this question. Unfortunately, some Marxists pay much less attention to the position of the Great-Russian liberal bourgeoisie, the Progressives and the Cadets. And yet he who fails to study and ponder over this position will inevitably flounder in abstractions and unsupported statements in discussing the question of the right of nations to self-determination.

Skilled though it is in the art of diplomatically evading direct answers to "unpleasant" questions, the *Rech*, the principal organ of the Constitutional-Democratic Party, was compelled, in its controversy with the *Pravda* last year, to make certain valuable admissions. The trouble started over the All-Ukrainian Students' Congress that was held in Lvov in the summer of 1913. Mr. Mogilyansky, the chartered "Ukrainian expert" or Ukrainian correspondent of the *Rech*, wrote an article in which he heaped the choicest invectives ("delirium," "adventurism," etc.) on the idea that the Ukraine should secede, which Dontsov, a Social-Nationalist, had advocated and the above-mentioned congress had approved.

The *Rabochaya Pravda*,<sup>60</sup> in no way identifying itself with Mr. Dontsov and plainly declaring that he was a Social-Nationalist and that many Ukrainian Marxists did not agree with him, stated that the *tone* of the *Rech*, or, rather, the way it formulated the question in principle, was improper and reprehensible for a Great-Russian democrat, or for anyone desiring to pass as a democrat.\* Let the *Rech* repudiate the Dontsovs if it likes, but from the standpoint of principle, a Great-Russian organ of democracy, as it claims to be, cannot be oblivious to *freedom* to secede, the *right* to secede.

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\* See Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. XIX, pp. 236-37.—Ed.

A few months later Mr. Mogilyansky, having learned from the Ukrainian newspaper *Shlyakhi*, published in Lvov, of Mr. Dontsov's reply—in the course of which, incidentally, Dontsov had stated that “the chauvinist attacks in the *Rech* have been properly branded” (stigmatized?) “only in the Russian Social-Democratic press,” wrote an “explanation” in the *Rech*, No. 331. His “explanation” consisted of the thrice-repeated statement that “criticism of Mr. Dontsov's recipes” “has nothing in common with rejection of the right of nations to self-determination.”

“It must be said,” wrote Mr. Mogilyansky, “that even ‘the right of nations to self-determination’ is not a fetish” (hear! hear!!) “that must not be criticized: unwholesome conditions in the life of nations may give rise to unwholesome tendencies in national self-determination, and the fact that these are brought to light does not mean that the right of nations to self-determination is rejected.”

As you see, this Liberal's talk about a “fetish” is quite in keeping with Rosa Luxemburg's. It was obvious that Mr. Mogilyansky wanted to avoid giving a direct reply to the question: does he recognize the right to political self-determination, i.e., to secession, or not?

The *Proletarskaya Pravda*<sup>61</sup> (No. 4, of December 11, 1913) also put this question *point-blank* to Mr. Mogilyansky and to the Constitutional-Democratic Party.\*

Thereupon the *Rech* (No. 340) published an unsigned, i.e., an official editorial statement replying to this question. This reply can be reduced to the following three points:

1) Point 11 of the program of the Constitutional-Democratic Party speaks openly, precisely and clearly of “the right of nations to free *cultural* self-determination.”

2) The *Rech* affirms that the *Proletarskaya Pravda* “hopelessly confuses” self-determination with separatism, with the secession of particular nations.

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\* See Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. XIX, pp. 475-77.—*Ed.*

3) "*Actually, the Constitutional-Democrats have never pledged themselves to advocate the right of 'nations to secede' from the Russian state.*" (See the article "National-Liberalism and the Right of Nations to Self-Determination," in the *Proletarskaya Pravda*, No. 12, December 20, 1913.\*)

Let us first consider the second point of the statement in the *Rech*. How vividly it shows Messrs. the Semkovskys, the Liebmans, the Yurkeviches and other opportunists that the hue and cry they have raised about the alleged "vagueness," or "indefiniteness," of the term "self-determination" is *in fact*, i.e., from the standpoint of objective class relationships and the class struggle in Russia, a *mere repetition* of the utterances of the liberal monarchist bourgeoisie!

The *Proletarskaya Pravda* put the following *three* questions to the enlightened "Constitutional-Democratic" gentlemen on the *Rech*: 1) Do they deny that throughout the history of international democracy, especially since the middle of the nineteenth century, self-determination of nations has been taken to mean precisely political self-determination, the right to form an independent national state? 2) Do they deny that the well-known resolution adopted by the International Socialist Congress in London in 1896 has the same meaning? and 3) Do they deny that Plekhanov, in writing about self-determination as far back as 1902, meant precisely political self-determination? When the *Proletarskaya Pravda* put these three questions, *Messrs. the Cadets became silent!!*

Not a word did they say in reply, for they had nothing to say. They had tacitly to admit that the *Proletarskaya Pravda* was absolutely right.

The outcries of the Liberals that the term "self-determination" is vague and that the Social-Democrats "hopelessly confuse" it with secession are nothing more

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\* *Ibid.*, Vol. XX, pp. 39-41.--*Ed.*

than attempts to *confuse* the issue, to evade recognition of a universally established democratic principle. If the Senkovskys, Liebman and Yurkeviches were not so ignorant, they would be ashamed to speak to the workers like *Liberals*.

But to proceed. The *Proletarskaya Pravda* compelled the *Rech* to admit that in the program of the Constitutional-Democrats the term "cultural" self-determination means in effect the *repudiation* of *political* self-determination.

"Actually, the Constitutional-Democrats have never pledged themselves to advocate the right of 'nations to secede' from the Russian state"—it was not without reason that the *Proletarskaya Pravda* recommended these words from the *Rech* to the *Novoye Vremya* and the *Zemshchina* as an example of the "loyalty" of our Cadets. Not missing the opportunity of mentioning the "Jews" and of making all kinds of caustic remarks at the expense of the Cadets, the *Novoye Vremya*, in its issue No. 13,563, nevertheless stated:

"What is an axiom of political wisdom among the Social-Democrats" (i.e., the recognition of the right of nations to self-determination, to secession), "is, today, beginning to arouse differences of opinion even in Cadet circles."

By declaring that they "have never pledged themselves to advocate the right of nations to secede from the Russian state," the Cadets, in principle, have taken exactly the same position as the *Novoye Vremya*. This is precisely one of the fundamentals of Cadet *National-Liberalism*, of their kinship with the Purishkeviches, and of their political dependence, ideological and practical, on the latter. The *Proletarskaya Pravda* wrote: "Messrs. the Cadets have studied history and are perfectly well aware of the 'pogrom-like,' to put it mildly, actions to which the exercise of the ancient right of the Purishkeviches to 'arrest and prevent'<sup>62</sup> has often led." Although they are perfectly well aware of the feudal source and nature of the omnipotence of the



Purishkeviches, the Cadets, nevertheless, are taking their stand *on the basis* of the relations and frontiers created by this very class. Knowing perfectly well how much there is in the relations and frontiers created or fixed by this class that is un-European, anti-European (we would say Asiatic if this did not sound undeservedly derogatory to the Japanese and Chinese), Messrs. the Cadets, nevertheless, accept them as the limit beyond which they dare not go.

Thus, they are adjusting themselves to the Purishkeviches, cringing to them, fearing to endanger their position, protecting them from the people's movement, from the democracy. As the *Proletarskaya Pravda* wrote: "Actually this means that they are adapting themselves to the interests of the feudal lords and to the worst nationalistic prejudices of the dominant nation instead of systematically combating these prejudices."

As men who are familiar with history and claim to be democrats, the Cadets do not even attempt to assert that the democratic movement which today characterizes Eastern Europe and Asia and is striving to change both on the model of the civilized capitalist countries, that this movement must leave intact the boundaries fixed by the feudal epoch, the epoch of the omnipotence of the Purishkeviches and the disfranchisement of wide strata of the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie.

The fact that the question raised in the controversy between the *Proletarskaya Pravda* and the *Rech* was not merely a literary question, but one that concerned a real political issue of the day, was proved, among other things, by the last conference of the Constitutional-Democratic Party, held on March 23-25, 1914. In the official report of this conference in the *Rech* (No. 83, of March 26, 1914) we read:

"A particularly lively discussion also took place on national problems. The Kiev deputies, who were supported by N. V. Nekrasov

and A. M. Kolyubakin, pointed out that the national question is becoming an important factor that will have to be taken up more resolutely than hitherto. F. F. Kokoshkin pointed out, however," (this "however" is like Shchedrin's "but"—"The ears never grow higher than the forehead, never!") "that both the program and past political experience demand that 'elastic formulas' of 'political self-determination of nationalities' should be handled very carefully."

This highly remarkable line of reasoning at the Cadet conference deserves the serious attention of all Marxists and of all democrats. (We will note in parentheses that the *Kievskaya Mysl*, which is evidently very well informed and no doubt presents Mr. Kokoshkin's ideas correctly, added that he laid special stress, as a warning to his opponents, of course, on the danger of the "disintegration" of the state.)

The official report in the *Rech* is composed with consummate diplomatic skill, so as to raise the curtain as little as possible and to conceal as much as possible. Yet, in the main, what took place at the Cadet conference is quite clear. The liberal-bourgeois delegates who were familiar with the state of affairs in the Ukraine, and the "Left" Cadets raised the question *precisely of political* self-determination of nations. Otherwise, there would have been no reason for Mr. Kokoshkin to urge that this "formula" should be "handled carefully."

The Cadet program, which, naturally, was known to the delegates at the Cadet conference, speaks *not* of political but of "cultural" self-determination. Hence, Mr. Kokoshkin was *defending* the program *against* the Ukrainian delegates, *against* the Left Cadets; he was defending "cultural" self-determination *as against* "political" self-determination. It is perfectly clear that in opposing "political" self-determination, in playing up the danger of the "disintegration of the state," in calling the formula "political self-determination" an "*elastic*" one (quite in keeping with Rosa Luxemburg!), Mr. Kokoshkin was defending Great-

Russian National-Liberalism against the more "Left" or more democratic elements of the Constitutional-Democratic Party, and against the Ukrainian bourgeoisie.

Mr. Kokoshkin was victorious at the Cadet conference, as is evident from the treacherous little word "however" in the report in the *Rech.* Great-Russian National-Liberalism has triumphed among the Cadets. Will not this victory help to clear the minds of those unwise individuals among the Marxists in Russia who, like the Cadets, have also begun to fear the "elastic formulas of political self-determination of nationalities"?

Let us, "however," examine the substance of Mr. Kokoshkin's line of thought. By referring to "past political experience" (i.e., evidently, the experience of 1905, when the Great-Russian bourgeoisie grew alarmed about its national privileges and scared the Cadet Party with its fears), and by playing up the danger of the "disintegration of the state," Mr. Kokoshkin revealed that he understood perfectly well that political self-determination can mean nothing else than the right to secede and to form an independent national state. The question is: How should Mr. Kokoshkin's fears be appraised in the light of democracy in general, and in the light of the proletarian class struggle in particular?

Mr. Kokoshkin would have us believe that recognition of the right to secession would increase the danger of the "disintegration of the state." This is the viewpoint of Constable Mymretsov, whose motto was: "arrest and prevent." From the viewpoint of democracy in general, the very opposite is the case: recognition of the right to secession *reduces* the danger of the "disintegration of the state."

Mr. Kokoshkin argues exactly like the nationalists. At their last congress they fiercely attacked the Ukrainian "Mazeppa-ites." The Ukrainian movement, exclaimed Mr. Savenko and Co., threatens to weaken the ties between the Ukraine and Russia; for by her Ukrainophilism Austria is

strengthening her ties with the Ukrainians!! Why Russia cannot try to "strengthen" her ties with the Ukrainians *by the same methods* that Messrs. the Savenkos blame Austria for using, i.e., by granting the Ukrainians freedom to use their own language, self-government, an autonomous Diet, etc., remains unexplained.

The arguments of the Savenkos and Kokoshkins are exactly alike, and they are equally ridiculous and absurd from the purely logical point of view. Is it not clear that the more liberty the Ukrainian nationality enjoys in any particular country, the firmer will its ties with that country be? One would think that this truism cannot be disputed without totally abandoning all the premises of democracy. And can there be greater freedom of nationality, as such, than freedom to secede, freedom to form an independent national state?

To clear up this question, which has been so confused by the liberals (and by those who echo them in their simplicity), we shall cite a very simple example. Let us take the question of divorce. In her article Rosa Luxemburg writes that the centralized democratic state, while conceding autonomy to its constituent parts, should retain the most important branches of legislation, including legislation on divorce, under the jurisdiction of the central parliament. The concern that the central authority of the democratic state should have the power to grant freedom of divorce is quite comprehensible. The reactionaries are opposed to freedom of divorce; they say that this must be "handled carefully," and loudly declare that it means the "disintegration of the family." The democrats, however, believe that the reactionaries are hypocrites, that actually they are defending the omnipotence of the police and the bureaucracy, the privileges of one sex and the worst kind of oppression of women. They believe that in actual fact freedom of divorce will not cause the "disintegration" of family ties but, on the contrary, will strengthen them on a demo-

cratic basis, which is the only possible and durable basis in civilized society.

To accuse the supporters of freedom of self-determination, i.e., freedom to secede, of encouraging separatism, is as foolish and as hypocritical as accusing the advocates of freedom of divorce of encouraging the destruction of family ties. Just as in bourgeois society the defenders of privilege and corruption, on which bourgeois marriage rests, oppose freedom of divorce, so, in the capitalist state, repudiation of the right to self-determination, i.e., the right of nations to secede, means simply defending the privileges of the dominating nation and police methods of administration to the detriment of democratic methods.

No doubt, the political corruption engendered by all the relations prevailing in capitalist society sometimes leads members of parliament and journalists to indulge in frivolous and even in nonsensical twaddle about one or another nation seceding. But only reactionaries can allow themselves to be frightened (or pretend to be frightened) by such twaddle. Those who stand by democratic principles, i.e., who insist that questions of state be decided by the mass of the population, know very well that there is a very big difference between what the politicians prate about and what the people decide. The mass of the population knows perfectly well from daily experience the value of geographical and economic ties and the advantages of a big market and of a big state. They will, therefore, resort to secession only when national oppression and national friction make joint life absolutely intolerable and hinder all and any economic intercourse. In that case, the interests of capitalist development and of the freedom of the class struggle will be best served by secession.

Thus, from whatever angle we approach Mr. Kokoshkin's arguments they prove to be the acme of absurdity and a mockery of the principles of democracy. But there is a modicum of logic in these arguments, the logic of the class

interests of the Great-Russian bourgeoisie. Like the majority of the members of the Constitutional-Democratic Party, Mr. Kokoshkin is a guardian of the moneybags of this bourgeoisie. He defends its privileges in general, and its *state* privileges in particular. He defends them hand in hand with Purishkevich, shoulder to shoulder with him, the only difference being that Purishkevich puts more faith in the feudal cudgel, while Kokoshkin and Co. realize that this cudgel was badly cracked in 1905, and rely more on bourgeois methods of deceiving the masses, such as frightening the philistines and the peasants with the spectre of the "disintegration of the state," deluding them with phrases about combining "national freedom" with the principles established by history, etc.

The liberals' hostility to the principle of political self-determination of nations can have one, and only one, real class meaning: National-Liberalism, defence of the state privileges of the Great-Russian bourgeoisie. And the opportunists among the Marxists in Russia, who today, under the June Third regime, have taken the field against the right of nations to self-determination—the Liquidator Semkovsky, the Bundist Liebman, the Ukrainian petty-bourgeois Yurkevich—are *actually* trailing behind the National-Liberals, corrupting the working class with National-Liberal ideas.

The interests of the working class and of its struggle against capitalism demand complete solidarity and the closest unity of the workers of all nations; they demand that the nationalistic policy of the bourgeoisie of every nationality be repelled. Hence, Social-Democrats would be equally deviating from proletarian policy and subordinating the workers to the policy of the bourgeoisie if they were to repudiate the right of nations to self-determination, i.e., the right of an oppressed nation to secede, or if they were to support all the national demands of the bourgeoisie of the oppressed nations. It makes no difference to the wagedwork-

er whether he is exploited chiefly by the Great-Russian bourgeoisie rather than by the non-Russian bourgeoisie, or by the Polish bourgeoisie rather than by the Jewish bourgeoisie, etc. The wageworker who has come to understand his class interests is equally indifferent to the state privileges of the Great-Russian capitalists and to the promises of the Polish or Ukrainian capitalists to set up an earthly paradise when they obtain state privileges. Capitalism is developing and will continue to develop, in one way or another, both in united heterogeneous states and in separate national states.

In any case the wageworker will be an object of exploitation. And successful struggle against exploitation requires that the proletariat be free of nationalism, be absolutely neutral, so to speak, in the fight for supremacy that is going on among the bourgeoisie of the various nations. If the proletariat of any one nation gives the slightest support to the privileges of "its" national bourgeoisie, this will inevitably rouse distrust among the proletariat of the other nation; it will weaken the international class solidarity of the workers and divide them, to the delight of the bourgeoisie. And repudiation of the right to self-determination, or secession, inevitably means, in practice, supporting the privileges of the dominating nation.

We will get even more striking confirmation of this if we take the concrete case of the secession of Norway from Sweden.

## 6. THE SECESSION OF NORWAY FROM SWEDEN

Rosa Luxemburg cites precisely this example and discusses it in the following way:

"The latest event in the history of federative relations, the secession of Norway from Sweden—which at the time was hastily seized upon by the social-patriotic Polish press (see the Cracow *Naprzód*)

as a gratifying sign of the strength and progressive nature of the aspirations for state separation—at once provided striking proof that federalism and its concomitant, separation, are in no way an expression of progress or democracy. After the so-called Norwegian ‘revolution,’ which meant that the Swedish king was deposed and compelled to leave Norway, the Norwegians very calmly chose another king, formally rejecting, by a national referendum, the proposal to establish a republic. What the superficial admirers of all national movements and all semblance of independence proclaimed as a ‘revolution’ was simply a manifestation of peasant and petty-bourgeois particularism, the desire to have their ‘own’ king for their money instead of one imposed upon them by the Swedish aristocracy, and consequently, was a movement that had absolutely nothing in common with revolution. At the same time, the dissolution of the union between Sweden and Norway showed once again to what extent, in this case too, federation, which had existed until then, was only an expression of purely dynastic interests and, therefore, merely a form of monarchism and reaction.” (*Przegłqd.*)

That is literally all that Rosa Luxemburg has to say on this score!! It must be confessed that it would have been difficult for Rosa Luxemburg to have revealed the hopelessness of her position more saliently than she has done in this particular instance.

The question was, and is, whether the Social-Democrats in a mixed national state need a program that recognizes the right to self-determination or to secession.

What does the example of Norway, cited by Rosa Luxemburg herself, tell us on this point?

Our author twists and turns, exercises her wit and rails at *Naprzód*, but she does not answer the question!! Rosa Luxemburg speaks about everything under the sun so as to avoid saying a single word about the actual point at issue!!

Undoubtedly, in wishing to have their own king for their money, and in rejecting, in a national referendum, the proposal to establish a republic, the Norwegian petty bourgeoisie displayed exceedingly bad philistine qualities. Undoubtedly, *Naprzód* displayed equally bad and equally philistine qualities by failing to notice this.



But what has all this to do with the case??

The question under discussion was the right of nations to self-determination and the attitude the socialist proletariat should adopt towards this right! Why, then, does not Rosa Luxemburg answer this question instead of skirting around it?

In the eyes of a mouse there is no animal stronger than the cat, it is said. In Rosa Luxemburg's eyes there is evidently no animal stronger than the "Fracy." "Fracy" is the popular term for the "Polish Socialist Party," the so-called revolutionary faction, and the Cracow newspaper, the *Naprzód*, shares the views of this "faction." Rosa Luxemburg is so blinded by her fight against the nationalism of this "faction" that everything except the *Naprzód* drops out of sight.

If the *Naprzód* says "yes," Rosa Luxemburg considers it her sacred duty immediately to say "no," without stopping to think that by doing so she does not show that she is independent of the *Naprzód*, but on the contrary, she shows that she is ludicrously dependent on the "Fracy," that she is unable to see things from a somewhat deeper and broader viewpoint than that of the Cracow anthill. The *Naprzód*, of course, is a wretched, and by no means a Marxist organ; but this should not prevent us from properly analyzing the example of Norway, once we have chosen it.

To analyze this example in a Marxist way, we must deal, not with the vices of the awfully terrible "Fracy," but, firstly, with the concrete historical features of the secession of Norway from Sweden, and, secondly, with the tasks the *proletariat* of both countries was confronted with in connection with this secession.

The geographic, economic and language ties between Norway and Sweden are no less close than those between many non-Great-Russian Slav nations and the Great Russians. But the union between Norway and Sweden was not a voluntary one, so that Rosa Luxemburg's reference to

"federation" is quite uncalled for, and she had recourse to it simply because she did not know what to say. Norway was *ceded* to Sweden by the monarchs during the Napoleonic wars, against the will of the Norwegians; and the Swedes had to bring troops into Norway to subjugate her.

Despite the exceptionally extensive autonomy which Norway enjoyed (she had her own parliament, etc.), for many decades after the union there was constant friction between Norway and Sweden, and the Norwegians bent all their efforts to throw off the yoke of the Swedish aristocracy. At last, in August 1905, they succeeded: the Norwegian parliament resolved that the Swedish king was no longer king of Norway, and in the referendum held later among the Norwegian people, the overwhelming majority (about 200,000 as against a few hundred) voted for complete separation from Sweden. After a short period of indecision, the Swedes resigned themselves to the fact of secession.

This example shows us on what grounds cases of the secession of nations are possible, and actually occur, under modern economic and political relations, and the *form* secession sometimes assumes under conditions of political freedom and democracy.

Not a single Social-Democrat, unless he wants to profess that political freedom and democracy are matters of indifference to him (and in that case he would naturally cease to be a Social-Democrat), can deny that this example is *practical* proof that it is the *bounden duty* of class-conscious workers to conduct systematic propaganda and prepare the ground for the settlement of conflicts that may arise over the secession of nations not in the "Russian way," but *only in the way* they were settled in 1905 between Norway and Sweden. This is exactly what is expressed by the demand in the program for the recognition of the right of nations to self-determination. But Rosa Luxemburg tried to get around a fact that was repugnant to her theory by severely attacking the philistinism of the Norwegian

philistines and the Cracow *Naprzód*; for she understood perfectly well that this historical fact *utterly refutes* her phrases that the right to self-determination of nations is a "utopia," that it is like the right "to eat from gold plates," etc. Such phrases only express a smug, opportunist faith in the immutability of the present alignment of forces among the nationalities of Eastern Europe.

Let us proceed further. In the question of the self-determination of nations, as in every other question, we are interested, first and foremost, in the self-determination of the proletariat within a given nation. Rosa Luxemburg modestly evaded this question too, for she realized that an analysis of it on the basis of the example of Norway, which she herself chose, would be disastrous for her "theory."

What position did the Norwegian and Swedish proletariat take, and indeed had to take, in the conflict over secession? *After* Norway seceded, the class-conscious workers of Norway would naturally have voted for a republic,\* and if some Socialists voted otherwise it only goes to show how much stupid, philistine opportunism there sometimes is in the European socialist movement. There can be no two opinions about that, and we mention this point only because Rosa Luxemburg is trying to obscure the issue by speaking *beside the point*. We do not know whether the Norwegian socialist program made it obligatory for Norwegian Social-Democrats to hold a particular view on the question of secession. We will assume that it did not, that the Norwegian Socialists left it an open question as to what extent the autonomy of Norway gave sufficient scope for freely waging the class struggle, or to what extent eternal friction and conflicts with the Swedish aristocracy hin-

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\* Since the majority of the Norwegian nation was in favour of a monarchy while the proletariat wanted a republic, then, generally speaking, the Norwegian proletariat was confronted with the alternative: either revolution, if conditions were ripe for it, or subordination to the will of the majority and prolonged propaganda and agitation work.

dered the freedom of economic life. But the fact that it was the duty of the Norwegian proletariat to oppose this aristocracy and to support Norwegian peasant democracy (even with all its philistine limitations) cannot be disputed.

And the Swedish proletariat? It is common knowledge that the Swedish landlords, abetted by the Swedish clergy, advocated war against Norway. And since Norway was much weaker than Sweden, since it had already experienced a Swedish invasion and since the Swedish aristocracy carries enormous weight in its own country, this advocacy of war presented a grave danger. We may be sure that the Swedish Kokoshkins spent much time and energy in trying to corrupt the minds of the Swedish people by appeals to "handle carefully" the "elastic formulas of political self-determination of nationalities," by painting horrible pictures of the danger of the "disintegration of the state" and by assuring them that "popular freedom" was compatible with the principles of the Swedish aristocracy. There cannot be the slightest doubt that the Swedish Social-Democrats would have betrayed the cause of Socialism and the cause of democracy if they had not fought with all their might to combat the landlord and "Kokoshkin" ideology and policy, and if they had not demanded *not only* equality of nations in general (to which the Kokoshkins also subscribe) but also the right of nations to self-determination, Norway's freedom to secede.

The close alliance of the Norwegian and Swedish workers, their complete fraternal class solidarity *gained* from the fact that the Swedish workers recognized the right of the Norwegians to secede. For this convinced the Norwegian workers that the Swedish workers were not infected with Swedish nationalism, that they placed fraternity with the Norwegian proletarians above the privileges of the Swedish bourgeoisie and aristocracy. The dissolution of the ties that had been foisted upon Norway by the monarchs of Europe and the Swedish aristocracy strengthened the ties

between the Norwegian and Swedish workers. The Swedish workers proved that in spite of *all* the vicissitudes of bourgeois policy—bourgeois relations may quite possibly cause a repetition of the forcible subjection of the Norwegians to the Swedes!—they will be able to preserve and defend the complete equality and class solidarity of the workers of both nations in the fight against both the Swedish and the Norwegian bourgeoisie.

Incidentally, this reveals how groundless and even frivolous are the attempts the "Fracy" sometimes make to "use" our disagreements with Rosa Luxemburg against Polish Social-Democracy. The "Fracy" are not a proletarian, and not a socialist, but a petty-bourgeois nationalist party, something like Polish Social-Revolutionaries. There never has been, nor could there be any question of unity between the Russian Social-Democrats and this party. On the other hand, not a single Russian Social-Democrat has ever "repented" of the close relations and unity that have been established with the Polish Social-Democrats. The Polish Social-Democrats have rendered great historical service by creating the first really Marxist, really proletarian party in Poland, a country which is thoroughly imbued with nationalistic aspirations and passions. But the service the Polish Social-Democrats have rendered is a great one not because Rosa Luxemburg has talked a lot of nonsense about point 9 of the Russian Marxists' program, but despite this sad circumstance.

The question of the "right to self-determination," of course, is not so important for the Polish Social-Democrats as it is for the Russians. It is quite understandable that in their zeal (sometimes a little excessive, perhaps) to combat the nationalistically blinded petty bourgeoisie of Poland the Polish Social-Democrats should "overdo" it. No Russian Marxist ever thought of blaming the Polish Social-Democrats for being opposed to the secession of Poland. These Social-Democrats err only when, like Rosa Luxem-

burg, they try to deny the necessity of including the recognition of the right to self-determination in the program of the *Russian Marxists*.

Virtually, this is like attempting to apply relationships, understandable when measured by Cracow standards, to all the peoples and nations inhabiting Russia, including the Great Russians. It means being "Polish nationalists inside out" and not Russian, not international Social-Democrats.

For international Social-Democracy stands for the recognition of the right of nations to self-determination. This is what we shall now proceed to discuss.

## 7. THE RESOLUTION OF THE LONDON INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS, 1896

This resolution reads:

"The Congress declares that it upholds the full right of self-determination" (Selbstbestimmungsrecht) "of all nations and expresses its sympathy for the workers of every country now suffering under the yoke of military, national or other absolutism; the Congress calls on the workers of all these countries to join the ranks of the class-conscious" (Klassenbewusste—those who understand their class interests) "workers of the whole world and to fight shoulder to shoulder with them for the defeat of international capitalism and for the achievement of the aims of international Social-Democracy."\*

As we have already pointed out, our opportunists, Messrs. Semkovsky, Liebman and Yurkevich, are simply unaware of this resolution. But Rosa Luxemburg is aware of it and

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\* See the official German report of the London Congress: "*Verhandlungen und Beschlüsse des internationalen sozialistischen Arbeiter- und Gewerkschafts-Kongresses zu London, vom 27. Juli bis 1. August 1896.*" Berlin, 1897, S. 18 (*Proceedings and Decisions of the International Socialist Labour and Trade Union Congress, held in London, July 27 to August 1, 1896*, Berlin, 1897, p. 18.—Tr.). A Russian pamphlet has been published containing the decisions of International Congresses, in which the word "self-determination" is wrongly translated as "autonomy."

quotes the full text, which contains the same expression as that contained in our program, "self-determination."

How does Rosa Luxemburg remove this obstacle which lies in the path of her "original" theory?

Oh, quite simply...the whole emphasis lies in the second part of the resolution...its declaratory character...one would refer to it only under a misapprehension!!

The helplessness and perplexity of our author are simply astounding. Usually, only the opportunists argue that the consistent democratic and socialist points in the program are merely declarations, and cravenly avoid an open debate on these points. Not without reason, apparently, has Rosa Luxemburg found herself this time in the deplorable company of Messrs. Semkovsky, Liebman and Yurkevich. Rosa Luxemburg does not venture to state openly whether she regards the above resolution as correct or erroneous. She wriggles and twists as if counting on the inattentive or ill-informed reader who forgets the first part of the resolution by the time he has started reading the second, or who has never heard of the discussion that took place in the socialist press *prior to* the London Congress.

However, Rosa Luxemburg is greatly mistaken if she imagines that she can so easily, before the class-conscious workers of Russia, trample upon the resolution of the International on such an important question of principle without even deigning to analyze it critically.

Rosa Luxemburg's point of view was voiced during the discussions which took place prior to the London Congress, mainly in the columns of *Die Neue Zeit*, the organ of the German Marxists, and *this point of view was virtually rejected by the International!* That is the crux of the matter, which the Russian reader particularly must bear in mind.

The debate turned on the question of the independence of Poland. Three points of view were advanced:

1. The point of view of the "Fracy," in whose name Hecker spoke. They wanted the International to include in

its program the demand for the independence of Poland. This proposal was not accepted. This point of view was defeated in the International.

2. Rosa Luxemburg's point of view, viz., that the Polish Socialists must not demand the independence of Poland. This point of view entirely precluded the proclamation of the right of nations to self-determination. This point of view was likewise defeated in the International.

3. The point of view which was then most comprehensively expounded by K. Kautsky in opposing Rosa Luxemburg and proving that her materialism was extremely "one-sided." According to this point of view, the International cannot at the present time make the independence of Poland a point in its program; but the Polish Socialists—said Kautsky—are fully entitled to advance such a demand. From the point of view of the Socialists, it is absolutely a mistake to ignore the tasks of national liberation in a situation where national oppression exists.

The resolution of the International reproduces the most essential, the fundamental propositions of this point of view: on the one hand, the absolutely direct, unequivocal recognition of the full right of all nations to self-determination; on the other hand, the equally unambiguous appeal to the workers for *international* unity in their class struggle.

We think that this resolution is absolutely correct, and that for the countries of Eastern Europe and Asia in the beginning of the twentieth century it is precisely this resolution, in both its parts taken as an inseparable whole, that gives the only correct lead to the proletarian class policy in the national question.

Let us deal with the three above-mentioned points of view in somewhat greater detail.

It is known that Karl Marx and Frederick Engels considered that it was the bounden duty of the whole of West-European democracy, and still more of Social-Democracy, actively to support the demand for the independence of



Poland. For the period of the 1840's and 1860's, the period of the bourgeois revolutions in Austria and Germany, and the period of the "Peasant Reform" in Russia, this point of view was quite correct and the only one that was consistently democratic and proletarian. So long as the masses of the people in Russia, and in most of the Slavic countries, were still dormant, so long as *there were no* independent, mass, democratic movements in these countries, the liberation movement of the *nobility* in Poland assumed immense, paramount importance from the point of view, not only of Russian, not only of Slavic, but of European democracy as a whole.\*

But while this standpoint of Marx was fully correct for the forties, fifties and sixties or for the third quarter of the nineteenth century, it has ceased to be correct in the twentieth century. Independent democratic movements, and even an independent proletarian movement, have arisen in most Slavic countries, even in one of the most backward Slavic countries, Russia. Aristocratic Poland has disappeared, yielding place to capitalist Poland. Under such circumstances Poland could not but lose its *exceptional* revolutionary importance.

The attempt of the P.P.S. (the Polish Socialist Party, the present-day "Fracy") in 1896 to "fix" for all time the point of view Marx held in a *different epoch* was an attempt

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\* It would be a very interesting piece of historical research to compare the position of a Polish noble-rebel in 1863 with that of the all-Russian democrat-revolutionary, Chernyshevsky, who, too (like Marx), knew how to appraise the importance of the Polish movement, and with that of the Ukrainian petty-bourgeois Dragomanov, who appeared much later and expressed the point of view of a peasant, so ignorant, so sleepy and attached so fast to his dung heap, that his legitimate hatred of the Polish *pan* prevented him from understanding the significance of their struggle for all-Russian democracy. (Cf. Dragomanov, *Historical Poland and Great-Russian Democracy*.) Dragomanov richly deserved the fervent kisses which were subsequently bestowed on him by Mr. P. B. Struve, who by that time had become a National-Liberal.

to use the *letter* of Marxism against the *spirit* of Marxism. Therefore, the Polish Social-Democrats were quite right when they attacked the extreme nationalism of the Polish petty bourgeoisie and pointed out that the national question was of secondary importance for Polish workers, when they for the first time created a purely proletarian party in Poland and proclaimed the extremely important principle that the Polish and the Russian workers must maintain the closest alliance in their class struggle.

But did this mean that at the beginning of the twentieth century the International could regard the principle of political self-determination of nations, or the right to secession, as superfluous for Eastern Europe and for Asia? This would have been the height of absurdity, and (theoretically) tantamount to admitting that the bourgeois-democratic reformation of the Turkish, Russian and Chinese states has been consummated, would have been tantamount (in practice) to opportunism towards absolutism.

No. During the period of incipient bourgeois-democratic revolutions in Eastern Europe and Asia, during the period of the awakening and intensification of national movements, during the period of formation of independent proletarian parties, the task of these parties with regard to national policy must be twofold: to recognize the right to self-determination for all nations, because the bourgeois-democratic reformation is not yet consummated, because working-class democracy consistently, seriously and sincerely, and not in a liberal, Kokoshkin fashion, fights for equal rights for nations, and to maintain the closest, inseparable alliance in the class struggle of the proletarians of all nations in a given state, throughout all the vicissitudes of its history, irrespective of any reshaping of the frontiers of the individual states by the bourgeoisie.

It is precisely this twofold task of the proletariat that the 1896 resolution of the International formulates. And this is the substance, the underlying principle, of the

resolution adopted by the Conference of Russian Marxists held in the summer of 1913. Some people profess to see a "contradiction" in the fact that while point 4 of this resolution, which recognizes the right to self-determination, to secession, seems to "concede" the maximum to nationalism (in reality the recognition of the *right of all* nations to self-determination implies the recognition of the maximum of *democracy* and the minimum of nationalism), point 5 warns the workers against the nationalistic slogans of the bourgeoisie of any nation and demands the unity and fusion of the workers of all nations into internationally united proletarian organizations. But this "contradiction" is apparent only to extremely shallow minds which cannot grasp, for instance, why the unity and class solidarity of the Swedish and the Norwegian proletariat *gained* when the Swedish workers upheld Norway's freedom to secede and form an independent state.

## 8. KARL MARX THE UTOPIAN AND PRACTICAL ROSA LUXEMBURG

While declaring the independence of Poland to be a "utopia" and repeating it *ad nauseam*, Rosa Luxemburg exclaims ironically: why not raise the demand for the independence of Ireland?

Evidently, "practical" Rosa Luxemburg is unaware of Karl Marx's attitude to the question of the independence of Ireland. It is worth while dwelling upon this, in order to show how a *concrete* demand for national independence was analyzed from a really Marxist and not an opportunist standpoint.

It was Marx's custom to "probe the teeth," as he expressed it, of his socialist acquaintances, testing their intelligence and the strength of their convictions. Having made the acquaintance of Lopatin, Marx wrote to Engels

on July 5, 1870, expressing a highly flattering opinion of the young Russian Socialist but adding at the same time:

"... *Poland* is his weak point. On this point he speaks quite like an Englishman—say, an English Chartist of the old school—about Ireland."

Marx questions a Socialist belonging to an oppressing nation about his attitude to the oppressed nation and he at once reveals the defect *common* to the Socialists of the dominant nations (the British and the Russian): failure to understand their socialist duties towards the downtrodden nations, their echoing of the prejudices acquired from the "Great Power" bourgeoisie.

Before passing on to Marx's positive declarations on Ireland, we must point out that in general the attitude of Marx and Engels to the national question was strictly critical, and that they recognized its historically relative importance. Thus, Engels wrote to Marx on May 23, 1851, that the study of history was leading him to pessimistic conclusions concerning Poland, that the importance of Poland was temporary—only until the agrarian revolution in Russia. The role of the Poles in history was one of "brave stupidity." "And one cannot point to a single instance in which Poland represented progress successfully, even if only in relation to Russia, or did anything at all of historic importance." Russia contains more elements of civilization, education, industry and of the bourgeoisie than the "Poles, whose whole nature is that of the idle cavalier." "What are Warsaw and Cracow compared to St. Petersburg, Moscow, Odessa!" Engels had no faith in the success of an insurrection of the Polish nobility.

But all these thoughts, so full of genius and penetration, by no means prevented Engels and Marx from treating the Polish movement with the most profound and ardent sympathy twelve years later, when Russia was still dormant and Poland was seething.

When drafting the Address of the International in

1864, Marx wrote to Engels (on November 4, 1864) that he had to combat Mazzini's nationalism, and went on to say: "In so far as international politics come into the Address, I speak of countries, not of nationalities, and denounce Russia, not the lesser nations." Marx had no doubt as to the subordinate position of the national question as compared with the "labour question." But his theory is as far from ignoring the national question as heaven from earth.

1866 arrives, Marx writes to Engels about the "Proudhonist clique" in Paris which "declares nationalities to be an absurdity and attacks Bismarck and Garibaldi. As polemics against chauvinism their tactics are useful and explicable. But when the believers in Proudhon (my good friends here, Lafargue and Longuet also belong to them) think that all Europe can and should sit quietly and peacefully on its behind until the gentlemen in France abolish poverty and ignorance... they become ridiculous." (Letter of June 7, 1866.)

"Yesterday," Marx writes on June 20, 1866, "there was a discussion in the International Council on the present war.... The discussion wound up, as was to be expected, with 'the question of nationality' in general and the attitude we should take towards it... The representatives of 'Young France' (*non-workers*) came out with the announcement that all nationalities and even nations were antiquated prejudices. Proudhonized Stirnerism.... The whole world waits until the French are ripe for a social revolution.... The English laughed very much when I began my speech by saying that our friend Lafargue, etc., who had done away with nationalities, had spoken 'French' to us, i.e., a language which nine-tenths of the audience did not understand. I also suggested that by the negation of nationalities he appeared, quite unconsciously, to understand their absorption into the model French nation."

The conclusion that follows from all these critical remarks of Marx is clear: the working class should be the

last to make a fetish of the national question, since the development of capitalism does not necessarily awaken *all* nations to independent life. But to brush aside the mass national movements once they have started and to refuse to support what is progressive in them means, in effect, pandering to *nationalistic* prejudices, viz., recognizing "one's own" as the "model nation" (or, we will add, as the nation possessing the exclusive privilege of forming a state).\*

But let us return to the question of Ireland.

Marx's position on this question is most clearly expressed in the following extracts from his letters:

"I have done my best to bring about this demonstration of the British workers in favour of Fenianism. . . . I used to think the separation of Ireland from England impossible. I now think it inevitable, although after the separation there may come federation." This is what Marx wrote to Engels on November 2, 1867.

In his letter of November 30 of the same year he added:

"... what shall we advise the *English* workers? In my opinion they must make the repeal of the Union" (Ireland with England, i.e., the separation of Ireland from England) "in short, the affair of 1783, only democratized and adapted to the conditions of the time, into an article of their pronunziamento. This is the only legal and therefore only possible form of Irish emancipation which can be admitted in the program of an *English* party. Experience must show later whether a purely personal union can continue to subsist between the two countries. . . .

"... What the Irish need is:

- "1) Self-government and independence from England;
- "2) An agrarian revolution. . . ."

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\* Cf. also Marx's letter to Engels of June 3, 1867: "... I have learned with real pleasure from the Paris letters to the *Times* about the pro-Polish exclamations of the Parisians as against Russia. . . . M. Proudhon and his little doctrinaire clique are not the French people."

Marx attached great importance to the question of Ireland and he delivered lectures of one-and-a-half-hours' duration at the German Workers' Union on this subject (letter of December 17, 1867).

Engels notes in a letter of November 20, 1868, "the hatred for the Irish among the English workers," and almost a year later (October 24, 1869), returning to this subject he writes:

"Il n'y a qu'un pas" (it is only one step) "from Ireland to Russia.... Irish history shows one how disastrous it is for a nation when it has subjugated another nation. All the abominations of the English have their origin in the Irish Pale. I have still to work through the Cromwellian period, but this much seems certain to me, that things would have taken another turn in England but for the necessity for military rule in Ireland and the creation of a new aristocracy there."

Let us note, in passing, Marx's letter to Engels of August 18, 1869:

"In Posen the Polish workers have brought a strike to a victorious end by the help of their colleagues in Berlin. This struggle against Monsieur le Capital—even in the subordinate form of the strike—is a more serious way of getting rid of national prejudices from that of the bourgeois gentlemen with their peace declamations."

The policy on the Irish question pursued by Marx in the International may be seen from the following:

On November 18, 1869, Marx writes to Engels that he spoke for an hour and a quarter in the Council of the International on the question of the attitude of the British Ministry to the Irish amnesty and proposed the following resolution:

"Resolved,

"that in his reply to the Irish demands for the release of the imprisoned Irish patriots Mr. Gladstone deliberately insults the Irish nation;

“that he clogs political amnesty with conditions alike degrading to the victims of misgovernment and the people they belong to;

“that having, in the teeth of his responsible position, publicly and enthusiastically cheered on the American slaveholders’ rebellion, he now steps in to preach to the Irish people the doctrine of passive obedience;

“that his whole proceedings with reference to the Irish amnesty question are the true and genuine offspring of that *‘policy of conquest,’* by the fiery denunciation of which Mr. Gladstone ousted his Tory rivals from office;

“that the *General Council* of the *‘International Workmen’s Association’* express their admiration of the spirited, firm and high-souled manner in which the Irish people carry on their amnesty movement;

“that these resolutions be communicated to all branches of, and workingmen’s bodies connected with, the *‘International Workingmen’s Association’* in Europe and America.”

On December 10, 1869, Marx writes that his paper on the Irish question to be read at the Council of the International will be framed on the following lines:

“... quite apart from all phrases about ‘international’ and ‘humane’ justice for Ireland—which are to be taken for granted in the *International Council*—it is in the direct and absolute interest of the English working class to get rid of their present connection with Ireland. And this is my most complete conviction, and for reasons which in part I cannot tell the English workers themselves. For a long time I believed that it would be possible to overthrow the Irish regime by English working-class ascendancy. I always expressed this point of view in *The New York Tribune*” (an American paper to which Marx contributed for a long time). “Deeper study has now convinced me of the opposite. The English working class will *never accomplish anything* before it has got rid of Ireland... English reac-



tion in England had its roots in the subjugation of Ireland.” (Marx’s italics.)

Marx’s policy on the Irish question should now be quite clear to the readers.

Marx, the “utopian,” was so “impractical” that he stood for the separation of Ireland, which has not been realized even half a century later. What gave rise to Marx’s policy, and was it not a mistake?

At first Marx thought that Ireland would be liberated not by the national movement of the oppressed nation, but by the working-class movement of the oppressing nation. Marx did not make an absolute of the national movement, knowing, as he did, that the victory of the working class alone can bring about the complete liberation of all nationalities. It is impossible to estimate beforehand all the possible correlations between the bourgeois liberation movements of the oppressed nations and the proletarian emancipation movement of the oppressing nation (the very problem which today makes the national question in Russia so difficult).

However, matters turned out so that the English working class fell under the influence of the Liberals for a fairly long time, became an appendage of the Liberals and by adopting a Liberal labour policy rendered itself effete. The bourgeois liberation movement in Ireland grew stronger and assumed revolutionary forms. Marx reconsidered his view and corrected it. “How disastrous it is for a nation when it has subjugated another nation.” The English working class will never be free until Ireland is freed from the English yoke. Reaction in England is strengthened and fostered by the enslavement of Ireland (just as reaction in Russia is fostered by her enslavement of a number of nations!).

And Marx, in proposing in the International a resolution of sympathy with “the Irish nation,” “the Irish people” (the clever *L. VI.* would probably have berated poor Marx

for forgetting about the class struggle!), advocates the *separation* of Ireland from England, "although after the separation there may come *federation*."

What were the theoretical grounds for this conclusion of Marx's? In England the bourgeois revolution had been consummated long ago. But it had not yet been consummated in Ireland; it is being consummated only now, after the lapse of half a century, by the reforms of the English Liberals. If capitalism had been overthrown in England as quickly as Marx at first expected, there would have been no room for a bourgeois-democratic and general national movement in Ireland. But since it had arisen, Marx advised the English workers to support it, to give it a revolutionary impetus and lead it to completion in the interests of *their own* liberty.

The economic ties between Ireland and England in the 1860's were, of course, even closer than Russia's present ties with Poland, the Ukraine, etc. The "impracticability" and "impossibility" of the separation of Ireland (if only owing to geographical conditions and England's immense colonial power) were quite obvious. While, in principle, an enemy of federalism, Marx in this instance permits also federation,\* *so long as* the emancipation of Ireland is achieved in a revolutionary and not in a reformist way, through the movement of the mass of the people of Ireland

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\* By the way, it is not difficult to see why, from a Social-Democratic point of view, the right of "self-determination" means *neither* federation *nor* autonomy (although, speaking in the abstract, both come under the category of "self-determination"). The right to federation is, in general, an absurdity, since federation is a two-sided contract. It goes without saying that Marxists cannot place the defence of federalism in general in their program. As far as autonomy is concerned, Marxists defend not "the right to" autonomy but autonomy *itself*, as a general, universal principle of a democratic state with a mixed national composition, with sharp differences in geographical and other conditions. Consequently, the recognition of the "right of nations to autonomy" is as absurd as the "right of nations to federation."

supported by the working class of England. There can be no doubt that only such a solution of the historical problem would be in the best interests of the proletariat and most favourable for rapid social development.

Things turned out differently. Both the Irish people and the English proletariat proved to be weak. Only now, through the miserable deals between the English Liberals and the Irish bourgeoisie, is the Irish problem *being solved* (the example of Ulster shows with what difficulty) through the land reform (with compensation) and autonomy (not introduced so far). Well then? Does it follow that Marx and Engels were "utopians," that they advanced "impossible" national demands, that they allowed themselves to be influenced by the Irish petty-bourgeois nationalists (there is no doubt about the petty-bourgeois nature of the Fenian movement), etc.?

No. In the Irish question too, Marx and Engels pursued a consistently proletarian policy, which really educated the masses in the spirit of democracy and Socialism. Only such a policy could have saved both Ireland and England from half a century of delay in the introduction of the necessary reforms, and could have prevented these reforms from being mutilated by the Liberals to please the reactionaries.

The policy of Marx and Engels in the Irish question serves as a splendid example, which retains immense *practical* importance to the present time, of the attitude the proletariat of the oppressing nations should adopt towards national movements. It serves as a warning against that "servile haste" with which the philistines of all countries, colours and languages hurry to declare "utopian" the idea of changing the frontiers of states that have been established by the violence and privileges of the landlords and bourgeoisie of one nation.

If the Irish and English proletariat had not accepted Marx's policy, and had not made the separation of Ireland

their slogan, that would have been the worst sort of opportunism, neglect of their duties as democrats and Socialists, and yielding to *English* reaction and to the *English* bourgeoisie.

## 9. THE 1903 PROGRAM AND ITS LIQUIDATORS

The *Minutes* of the 1903 Congress, at which the program of the Russian Marxists was adopted, have become a great rarity, so that the overwhelming majority of the active workers in the working-class movement today are unacquainted with the motives that underline the various points of the program (the more so since not all the literature relevant thereto enjoys the blessings of legality...). It is therefore necessary to analyze the debate that took place at the 1903 Congress on the question under discussion.

Let us state first of all that however meagre the Russian Social-Democratic literature on the "right of nations to self-determination" may be, it, nevertheless, clearly shows that this right was always understood to mean the right to secession. Messrs. the Semkovskys, Liebmans and Yurkeviches, who doubt this and declare that point 9 is "vague," etc., do so only because of their extreme ignorance or carelessness. As far back as 1902, Plekhanov, in the *Zarya*, defending "the right to self-determination" in the draft program, wrote that this demand, while not obligatory for the bourgeois democrats, is "obligatory for the Social-Democrats." "If we were to forget or hesitate to advance it," wrote Plekhanov, "for fear of offending the national prejudices of our fellow countrymen of the Great-Russian nationality, the call... 'workers of all countries, unite!' on our lips would become a brazen lie..."

This is a very apt characterization of the fundamental argument in favour of the point under consideration; so apt that it is not surprising that the critics of our program

who have "forgotten their kin" have been timidly avoiding it. The abandonment of this point, no matter for what motives, is *really* a "shameful" concession to *Great-Russian* nationalism. But why Great-Russian, when it is a question of the right of *all* nations to self-determination? Because it refers to secession *from* the Great Russians. In the interests of the *unity of the proletarians*, in the interests of their class solidarity, we must recognize the right of *nations* to *secession*—that is what Plekhanov admitted in the words quoted above twelve years ago. Had our opportunists pondered over this they would probably not have talked so much nonsense about self-determination.

At the 1903 Congress, which adopted the draft program that Plekhanov advocated, the main work was done in the *Program Commission*. Unfortunately, no record of its proceedings was kept; it would have been particularly interesting on this point, for it was *only* in the Commission that the representatives of the Polish Social-Democrats, Warszawski and Hanecki, tried to defend their view and to dispute the "recognition of the right to self-determination." The reader who took the trouble to compare their arguments (expounded in the speech by Warszawski and in his and Hanecki's declaration, pp. 134-36 and 388-90 of the *Congress Minutes*) with those Rosa Luxemburg advanced in her Polish article, which we have analyzed, would find that they are completely identical.

How were these arguments treated by the Program Commission of the Second Congress, where Plekhanov, more than anyone else, attacked the Polish Marxists? These arguments were mercilessly ridiculed! The absurdity of proposing to the Marxists of *Russia* that they delete the recognition of the right of nations to self-determination was demonstrated so clearly and vividly that the Polish Marxists *did not even venture to repeat their arguments at the full meeting of the Congress!!* They left the Congress, convinced of the hopelessness of their case at the supreme

assembly of Great-Russian, as well as Jewish, Georgian and Armenian Marxists.

This historic episode is naturally of very great importance for everyone who is seriously interested in *his* program. The fact that the arguments of the Polish Marxists suffered utter defeat in the Program Commission of the Congress, and that the Polish Marxists gave up the attempt to defend their views at the full meeting of the Congress is very significant. It is not without reason that Rosa Luxemburg "modestly" kept silent about it in her article in 1908; apparently the recollection of the Congress was too unpleasant! She also kept quiet about the ridiculously inept proposal made by Warszawski and Hanecki in 1903, on behalf of all the Polish Marxists, to "amend" point 9 of the program, a proposal which neither Rosa Luxemburg nor, the other Polish Social-Democrats have ventured (or will venture) to repeat.

But although Rosa Luxemburg, concealing her defeat in 1903, maintained silence on these facts, those who take an interest in the history of their Party will make it their business to ascertain the facts and ponder over their significance.

On leaving the 1903 Congress Rosa Luxemburg's friends submitted the following statement:

"... We propose that point 7" (now point 9) "of the draft program read as follows: Point 7. *Institutions guaranteeing full freedom of cultural development to all nations incorporated in the state.*" (P. 390 of the *Minutes*.)

Thus, the Polish Marxists then propounded views on the national question that were so vague that *instead of* self-determination they actually proposed the notorious "cultural-national autonomy," under another name!

This sounds almost incredible, but unfortunately it is a fact. At the Congress itself, although it was attended by five Bundists with five votes and three Caucasians with

six votes, not counting Kostrov's<sup>63</sup> consulting voice, not a *single* vote was cast for the *deletion* of the point about self-determination. Three votes were cast for the proposal to add to this point "cultural-national autonomy" (in favour of Goldblatt's formula: "the establishment of institutions guaranteeing to the nations full freedom of cultural development") and four votes for Lieber's formula ("the right of nations to freedom in their cultural development").

Now that a Russian Liberal party, the Constitutional-Democratic Party, has appeared on the scene, we know that in *its* program the political self-determination of nations has been replaced by "cultural self-determination." Thus, Rosa Luxemburg's Polish friends were so successful in "*combating*" the nationalism of the P.P.S. that they proposed to substitute a *Liberal* program for the Marxist program! And in the same breath they accused our program of being opportunist; no wonder this accusation was received with laughter in the Program Commission of the Second Congress!

How was "self-determination" understood by the delegates at the Second Congress, of whom, as we have seen, *not a single one* was opposed to "self-determination of nations"?

The following three extracts from the *Minutes* provide the answer:

"*Martynov* is of the opinion that the term 'self-determination' should not be given a broad interpretation; it merely means the right of a nation to set itself up as a separate political entity and not regional self-government." (P. 171.) *Martynov* was a member of the Program Commission in which the arguments of Rosa Luxemburg's friends were repudiated and ridiculed. In his views, *Martynov* was then "an Economist," a rabid opponent of *Iskra*; and had he expressed an opinion which was not shared by the majority of the Program Commission he would certainly have been repudiated.

Goldblatt, a Bundist, was the first to speak when the Congress, after the Commission had finished its work, discussed point 8 (present point 9) of the program.

Goldblatt said:

"Nothing can be said against the 'right to self-determination.' When a nation is fighting for independence, it should not be opposed. If Poland refuses to enter into legal marriage with Russia, she should not be interfered with, as Plekhanov put it. I agree with this opinion within these limits." (Pp. 175-76.)

Plekhanov did not speak at all on this subject at the full meeting of the Congress. Goldblatt referred to what Plekhanov had said in the Program Commission, where the "right to self-determination" had been explained in a simple and detailed manner to mean the right to secession. Lieber, who spoke after Goldblatt, remarked:

"Of course, if any nationality finds that it cannot live within the frontiers of Russia, the Party will not place any obstacles in its way." (P. 176.)

The reader will see that at the Second Congress of the Party, which adopted the program, there were no two opinions about self-determination meaning "only" the right to secession. Even the Bundists assimilated this truth at that time, and only in our deplorable times of continued counterrevolution and all sorts of "apostasy" can we find people who, bold in their ignorance, declare that the program is "vague." But before devoting time to these sorry "Quasi-Social-Democrats," let us first finish with the attitude of the Poles to the program.

They came to the Second Congress (1903) declaring that unity was necessary and imperative. But they left the Congress after their "reverses" in the Program Commission, and their *last word* was their written statement, printed in the *Minutes* of the Congress, containing the above-mentioned proposals to *substitute* cultural-national autonomy for self-determination.



In 1906 the Polish Marxists joined the Party, and neither upon joining nor afterwards (neither at the Congress of 1907, nor at the conferences of 1907 and 1908, nor at the plenum of 1910) *did they once introduce* a single proposal to amend point 9 of the Russian program!!

This is a fact.

And despite all phrases and assurances, this fact definitely proves that Rosa Luxemburg's friends regarded this question as having been settled by the debate in the Program Commission of the Second Congress as well as by the decision of that Congress; that they tacitly acknowledged their mistake and corrected it by joining the Party in 1906, after they had left the Congress in 1903, without having once tried through *Party* channels to raise the question of amending point 9 of the program.

Rosa Luxemburg's article appeared over her signature in 1908—of course, no one ever took it into his head to deny the right of Party writers to criticize the program—and *since* this article was written not a *single* official body of the Polish Marxists has raised the question of revising point 9.

Hence, Trotsky is rendering certain admirers of Rosa Luxemburg a very clumsy service when he writes, in the name of the editors of the *Borba*, in No. 2 of that publication (March 1914):

"... The Polish Marxists consider that 'the right to national self-determination' is entirely devoid of political content and should be deleted from the program." (P. 25.)

The obliging Trotsky is more dangerous than an enemy! Trotsky could produce *no* proof except "private conversations" (i.e., simply gossip, on which Trotsky always subsists) for classifying "Polish Marxists" in general as supporters of every article that Rosa Luxemburg writes. Trotsky represented the "Polish Marxists" as people without honour and conscience, incapable of respecting even their

own convictions and the program of their Party. Obliging Trotsky!

When, in 1903, the representatives of the Polish Marxists left the Second Congress *because* of the right to self-determination, Trotsky could have said *at that time* that they regarded this right as devoid of content and that it should be deleted from the program.

But after this the Polish Marxists *joined* the Party which possessed such a program, and not once have they brought in a motion to amend it.\*

Why did Trotsky withhold these facts from the readers of his journal? Only because he finds it advantageous to speculate on inciting disagreements between the Polish and the Russian opponents of Liquidatorism and on deceiving the Russian workers on the question of the program.

Never yet has Trotsky held a firm opinion on any important question of Marxism. He always manages to "creep into the chinks" of this or that difference of opinion, and desert one side for the other. At the present moment he is in the company of the Bundists and the Liquidators. And these gentlemen do not stand on ceremony where the Party is concerned.

Listen to the Bundist Liebman.

"When, fifteen years ago," writes this gentleman, "the Russian Social-Democrats included the point about the right of every nationality to 'self-determination' in their program, everyone (!!) asked himself: what does this fashionable (!!) term really mean? No answer was forthcoming (!!). This word was left (!!) enveloped in fog. Indeed, it

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\* We are informed that at the Summer Conference of the Russian Marxists in 1913, the Polish Marxists attended with *only* a voice but no vote and did not vote at all on the right to self-determination (to secession), declaring their opposition to this right in general. Of course, they had a perfect right to act in this way, and, as hitherto, to agitate in Poland against her secession. But this is not quite what Trotsky is saying; for the Polish Marxists did not demand the "deletion" of point 9 "from the program."

was difficult at the time to dissipate that fog. The time had not yet come when this point could be made concrete—it was said then—let it remain enveloped in fog (!!) for the time being and life itself will indicate what content is to be put into this point."

Isn't this "ragamuffin"<sup>64</sup> mocking at the Party program magnificent?

And why is he mocking?

Only because he is a complete ignoramus who has never learned anything, who has not even read anything on Party history, but who simply happened to drop into a Liquidatorist environment, where it is "the thing" to be blasé on the question of the Party and everything it stands for.

In Pomyalovsky's novel, a seminary student brags of having "spat into the barrel with sauerkraut." Messrs. the Bundists go even further. They put up the Liebmans so that these gentlemen may publicly spit into their own barrel. What do Messrs. the Liebmans care about the fact that an International Congress has passed a decision, that at the Congress of their own Party two representatives of their own Bund proved that they were quite able (and what "severe" critics and determined enemies of the *Iskra* they were!) to understand the meaning of "self-determination" and even agreed to it? And would it not be easier to liquidate the Party if the "Party writers" (don't laugh) treated the history and the program of the Party in seminary student fashion?

Here is a second "ragamuffin," Mr. Yurkevich of the *Dzvin*. Mr. Yurkevich has evidently seen the *Minutes* of the Second Congress, for he cites Plekhanov's words, as repeated by Goldblatt, and shows that he is aware of the fact that self-determination can only mean the right to secession. This, however, does not prevent him from spreading slander among the Ukrainian petty bourgeoisie about the Russian Marxists, alleging that they are in favour of the "state integrity" of Russia. (No. 7-8, 1913, p. 83, etc.)

Of course, Messrs. the Yurkeviches could not have invented a better method than this slander for alienating the Ukrainian democrats from the Great-Russian democrats. And such alienation is in line with the whole policy of the group of the *Dzvin* writers, who advocate the *segregation* of the Ukrainian workers in a *separate* national organization!\*

It is quite appropriate, of course, for a group of nationalist philistines who are splitting the ranks of the proletariat—and such precisely is the objective role of the *Dzvin*—to disseminate such hopeless confusion on the national question. It goes without saying that the Yurkeviches and Liebmanns, who are “terribly” offended when they are called “near-Party men,” do not say a word, not a single word, as to how *they* would like the problem of the right of secession to be solved in the program.

Here is the third and principal “ragamuffin,” Mr. Semkovsky, who in the columns of a Liquidatorist newspaper, with a Great-Russian audience before him, rails at point 9 of the program and at the same time declares that he “for certain reasons does not approve of the proposal” to delete this point!!

This is incredible, but it is a fact.

In August 1912, the conference of the Liquidators officially raised the national question. For a year and a half not a single article has appeared on the question of point 9 except for the one written by Mr. Semkovsky. And in this article the author *repudiates* the program, “not approving,” however, “for *certain* reasons” (is it a secret disease?) the proposal to amend it!! We would lay a wager that it would be difficult to find anywhere in the world similar examples of opportunism, and worse than opportunism, of the renunciation of the Party, of its liquidation.

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\* See particularly Mr. Yurkevich's preface to Mr. Levinsky's book *Outline of the Development of the Ukrainian Working-Class Movement in Galicia*, Kiev 1914.

One instance will suffice to show what Semkovsky's arguments are like:

"What are we to do," he writes, "if the Polish proletariat desires to fight side by side with the entire Russian proletariat, within the framework of a single state, while the reactionary classes of Polish society, on the contrary, desire to separate Poland from Russia and in a referendum obtain a majority of votes in favour of secession? Should we Russian Social-Democrats in the central parliament vote together with our Polish comrades *against* secession, or—in order not to violate the 'right to self-determination'—vote *for* secession?" (*Novaya Rabochaya Gazeta*, No. 71.)

From this it is evident that Mr. Semkovsky does not even understand *what the discussion is about*! It did not occur to him that the right to secession presupposes the settlement of the question *not* by the central parliament, but by the parliament (diet, referendum, etc.) of the *seceding* region.

The childish perplexity over the question—"What are we to do" if under democracy the majority is for reaction?—serves to screen the question of real, actual, live politics, when *both* the Purishkeviches *and* the Kokoshkins consider even the idea of secession as criminal! Probably, the proletarians of *all* Russia ought not to fight the Purishkeviches and the Kokoshkins today, but, passing them by, fight the reactionary classes of Poland!!

Such is the incredible nonsense that is written in the organ of the Liquidators, of which Mr. L. Martov is one of the ideological leaders, the same L. Martov who drafted the program and got it carried in 1903, and even subsequently wrote in favour of the right of secession. Apparently L. Martov is now arguing according to the rule:

*No clever man required there;  
Better send Read,  
And I shall wait and see.*<sup>65</sup>

He sends Read-Semkovsky, and allows our program to be distorted and endlessly confused in a daily paper before new readers, who are unacquainted with it.

Yes, Liquidatorism has gone a long way—even very many prominent ex-Social-Democrats have not a trace of Party spirit left in them.

Rosa Luxemburg cannot, of course, be put on a par with the Liebmanns, Yurkeviches and Semkovskys, but the fact that it is precisely people of this kind who seize upon her mistake shows with particular clarity the opportunism she has lapsed into.

## 10. CONCLUSION

Let us sum up.

From the point of view of the theory of Marxism in general the question of the right of self-determination presents no difficulties. No one can seriously dispute the London resolution of 1896, or the fact that self-determination implies only the right to secession, or the fact that the formation of independent national states is the tendency of all bourgeois-democratic revolutions.

The difficulty is created to a certain extent by the fact that in Russia the proletariat of both oppressed and oppressing nations are fighting and must fight side by side. The task is to preserve the unity of the class struggle of the proletariat for Socialism, to resist all the bourgeois and Black-Hundred nationalist influences. Among the oppressed nations the separate organization of the proletariat as an independent party sometimes leads to such a bitter struggle against the nationalism of the respective nation that the perspective becomes distorted and the nationalism of the oppressing nation is forgotten.

But this distortion of the perspective cannot last long. The experience of the joint struggle of the proletarians of various nations has demonstrated only too plainly that we

must formulate political questions not from the "Cracow," but from the all-Russian point of view. And in all-Russian politics it is the Purishkeviches and the Kokoshkins who rule. Their ideas are predominant, their persecution of alien races for "separatism," for *thinking* about secession, are being preached and practised in the Duma, in the schools, in the churches, in the barracks, and in hundreds and thousands of newspapers. It is this Great-Russian poison of nationalism that is contaminating the entire all-Russian political atmosphere. The misfortune of a nation, which, in subjugating other nations, is strengthening reaction throughout Russia. The memories of 1849 and 1863 form a living political tradition, which, unless great storms sweep the country, threatens to hamper every democratic and *especially* every Social-Democratic movement for many decades.

There can be no doubt that, however natural the point of view of certain Marxists of the oppressed nations (whose "misfortune" is sometimes that the masses of the population are blinded by the idea of "their" national liberation) may appear at times, *in reality* the objective alignment of class forces in Russia makes refusal to advocate the right of self-determination tantamount to the worst opportunism, to the contamination of the proletariat with the ideas of the Kokoshkins. And in substance, these ideas are the ideas and the policy of the Purishkeviches.

Therefore, if Rosa Luxemburg's point of view could at first be excused as being specifically Polish, "Cracow" narrow-mindedness,\* at the present time, when nationalism

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\* It is not difficult to understand that the recognition by the Marxists of the *whole of Russia*, and first and foremost by the Great Russians, of the *right* of nations to secede in no way precludes *agitation* against secession by Marxists of a particular *oppressed* nation, just as the recognition of the right to divorce does not preclude agitation against divorce in a particular case. We think, therefore, that the number of Polish Marxists will inevitably increase who will laugh at the non-existent "contradiction" which is now being "hashed up" by Semkovsky and Trotsky.

and, above all governmental Great-Russian nationalism, has grown stronger everywhere, when policy is being shaped by this *Great-Russian* nationalism, such narrow-mindedness becomes inexcusable. In actuality it is being seized upon by the opportunists of *all* nations who fight shy of the idea of "storms" and "leaps," believe that the bourgeois-democratic revolution is complete, and yearn for the Liberalism of the Kokoshkins.

Great-Russian nationalism, like any other nationalism, passes through various phases, according to the classes that are supreme in the bourgeois country at the time. Up to 1905 we knew almost exclusively national reactionaries. After the revolution *National-Liberals* arose in our country.

In our country this is virtually the position adopted both by the Octobrists and by the Cadets (Kokoshkin), i.e., by the whole of the present-day bourgeoisie.

And later on, Great-Russian National Democrats will *inevitably* appear. Mr. Peshekhonov, one of the founders of the "Popular Socialist" Party, has already expressed this point of view when (in the issue of *Russkoye Boyatstvo* for August 1906) he appealed for caution in regard to the nationalist prejudices of the peasant. However much others may slander us Bolsheviks and declare that we "idealize" the peasant, we always have made and always will make a clear distinction between peasant intelligence and peasant prejudice, between peasant strivings for democracy and opposition to Purishkevich, and peasant strivings to make peace with the priest and the landlord.

Even now, and probably for a fairly long time to come, proletarian democracy must reckon with the nationalism of the Great-Russian peasants (not in the sense of making concessions to it, but in the sense of combating it).<sup>\*</sup> The awakening of nationalism among the oppressed nations, which became so pronounced after 1905 (let us

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<sup>\*</sup> It would be interesting to trace the changes that take place in Polish nationalism, for example, in its process of transformation from



recall, say, the group of "Autonomists-Federalists" in the First Duma, the growth of the Ukrainian movement, of the Moslem movement, etc.), will inevitably cause the intensification of nationalism among the Great-Russian petty bourgeoisie in town and country. The slower the democratization of Russia, the more persistent, brutal and bitter will be national persecution and quarrelling among the bourgeoisie of the various nations. The particularly reactionary nature of the Russian Purishkeviches will at the same time engender (and strengthen) "separatist" tendencies among the various oppressed nationalities which sometimes enjoy far greater freedom in the neighbouring states.

This state of affairs confronts the proletariat of Russia with a twofold or, rather, a two-sided task: to combat all nationalism and, above all, Great-Russian nationalism; to recognize not only complete equality of rights for all nations in general, but also equality of rights as regards statehood, i.e., the right of nations to self-determination, to secession. And at the same time, precisely in the interest of the successful struggle against the nationalism of all nations in any form, preserving the unity of the proletarian struggle and of the proletarian organizations, amalgamating these organizations into a close-knit international association, in spite of the bourgeois strivings for national segregation.

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aristocratic nationalism into bourgeois nationalism and then into peasant nationalism. Ludwig Bernhard, in his book *Das Polnische Gemeinwesen im preussischen Staat* (*The Polish Community in the Prussian State*; there is a Russian translation), sharing the view of a German Kozoshkin, describes a very characteristic phenomenon: the formation of a sort of "peasant republic" by the Poles in Germany in the form of a close alliance of the various cooperatives and other associations of the *Polish* peasants in their struggle for nationality, for religion, for "Polish" land. German oppression has welded the Poles together, segregated them, first awakening the nationalism of the aristocracy, then of the bourgeois, and finally of the peasant masses (especially after the campaign the Germans inaugurated in 1873 against the Polish language in schools). Things are moving in the same direction in Russia, and not only in regard to Poland.

Complete equality of rights for all nations; the right of nations to self-determination; the amalgamation of the workers of all nations—this is the national program that Marxism, the experience of the whole world, and the experience of Russia, teaches the workers.

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This article was already set up when I received No. 3 of *Nasha Rabochaya Gazeta*, where Mr. Vl. Kossovsky writes as follows about the recognition of the right to self-determination for all nations:

“Taken over mechanically from the resolution of the First Congress of the Party (1898), which in turn had borrowed it from the decisions of International Socialist Congresses, it was given, as is evident from the debate, the same meaning at the 1903 Congress as was put into it by the Socialist International, viz., political self-determination, i.e., the self-determination of nations in the direction of political independence. Thus, the formula: national self-determination, which implies the right to territorial separation, does not affect in any way the question of how national relations *within* a given state organism should be regulated for nationalities that cannot or have no desire to leave the present state.”

It is evident from this that Mr. Vl. Kossovsky has seen the *Minutes* of the Second Congress of 1903 and understands perfectly well the real (and only) meaning of the term self-determination. Compare this with the fact that the editors of the Bund newspaper *Zeit* put up Mr. Lieberman to jeer at the program and to declare that it is vague!! Queer “party” ethics among these Bundists. . . . Why Kossovsky declares that the Congress took over the principle of self-determination *mechanically*, “Allah alone knows.” Some people “want to object,” but how, why and wherefore, they do not know.

*Prosveshcheniye*,

Nos. 4, 5 and 6 for 1914

V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*,  
Fourth Russian Edition,  
Vol. XX, pp. 365-424

## OBJECTIVE DATA ON THE STRENGTH OF THE DIFFERENT TRENDS IN THE WORKING-CLASS MOVEMENT

For the class-conscious workers there is no more important task than that of *knowing* their class movement, its nature, its aims and objects, its conditions and practical forms. For the whole strength of the working-class movement lies in its political consciousness, and in its *mass* character. At every step in its development, capitalism increases the number of proletarians, of wagedworkers, rallies, organizes and enlightens them, and in this way prepares the class force that must inevitably march towards its goal.

The program of the Marxists and their decisions on tactics, as constantly set forth and explained in the press, help to inculcate in the masses of the workers a knowledge of the nature, aims and objects of the movement.

The conflict between the various trends in the working-class movement of Russia has deep class roots. The two "trends" which are fighting Marxism (*Pravda*-ism) in the working-class movement of Russia and which deserve (because of their mass form and of their roots in history) to be called "trends," i.e., Narodism and Liquidatorism, express the influence of the bourgeoisie over the

proletariat. This has been explained many times by the Marxists and recognized in a number of decisions they have adopted in relation to the Narodniks (the fight against whom has been going on for thirty years) and in relation to the Liquidators (the history of Liquidatorism goes back about twenty years, for Liquidatorism is the direct continuation of "Economism" and Menshevism).

More and more *objective* data are now accumulating on the strength of the different trends in the working-class movement of Russia. Every effort must be made to collect, verify and study these objective data on the conduct and moods not of individuals or groups, but of the *masses*, data taken from different *hostile* newspapers, data that can be *verified* by any literate person.

Only with the help of such data can one learn and make a study of the movement of one's class. One of the gravest, if not the gravest, defects (or crimes against the working class) of the Narodniks and Liquidators, as well as of the various coteries of intellectuals such as the "Vperyod-ists," Plekhanovites and Trotskyites, is their *subjectivism*. At every step they try to pass off their desires, their "opinions," their estimation of the situation and their "plans" as the will of the workers, as the needs of the working-class movement. When they talk about "unity," for example, they majestically ignore the *experience* acquired in creating the genuine unity of the *majority* of the class-conscious workers of Russia in the course of two-and-a-half years, from the beginning of 1912 to the middle of 1914.

Let us then tabulate the available *objective* data on the strength of the different trends in the working-class movement. Those who believe subjective appraisals and promises are free to go to the "coteries." We invite only those who desire to study objective figures. Here are the figures:

	Pravda-ists	Liqui-dators	Per cent		Left Narod-niks
			Prav-da-ists	Liquida-tors	
<i>State Duma Elections:</i>					
1. No. of deputies elected by workers' curia:					
II Duma 1907 . . .	11	12	47	53	—
III Duma 1907-12 . .	4	4	50	50	} boycott
IV Duma 1912 . . .	6	3	67	33	
<i>No. of Workers' Groups Which Donated Funds:</i>					
2. No. of donations by workers' groups for St. Petersburg newspapers:					
1912 . . . . .	620	89	—	—	—
1913 . . . . .	2,181	661	76.9	23.1	264
to May 13, 1914 . .	2,873	671	81.1	18.9	524
<i>Election of Workers' Representatives to Insurance Boards:</i>					
3. No. of representatives to All-Russian Insurance Board . . . . .	47	10	82.4	17.6	71-2?
4. Ditto Metropolitan Insurance Board . . . . .	37	7	84.1	15.9	4
<i>Signatures to Resolutions in Favour of Each of the Duma Groups:</i>					
5. No. of signatures published in both newspapers in favour of the "six" (Pravda-ists) and for the "seven" (Liqui-dators). . . . .	6,722	2,985	69.2	30.8	—

	<i>Pravda</i> -ists	Liqui-dators	Per cent		Left Narod-niks
			<i>Prav-da</i> -ists	Liquida-tors	
<i>Connection with Workers' Groups:</i>					
6. No. of communications with various contributions from workers' groups to either of the Duma Groups (Oct. 1913 to June 6, 1914). . . .	1,295	215	85.7	14.3	—
<i>Circulation of St. Petersburg Newspapers:</i>					
7. No. of copies printed (figures collected and published by E. Vandervelde) . . . . .	40,000	16,000	71.4	28.6	12,000 (3 times a week)
<i>Press Abroad:</i>					
8. No. of issues of leading newspapers published after August (1912) Conference of Liquidators to July 1914 . . .	5	0	—	—	9
9. No. of references in these issues to non-legal organizations (one locality counted as one reference) . . . . .	44	0	—	—	21
<i>Dependence on the Bourgeoisie:</i>					
10. Funds contributed to St. Petersburg newspapers (from January 1 to May 13, 1914). Percentage of contributions from non-workers . . .	—	—	13	56	50

	Pravda-ists	Liqui-dators	Per cent		Left Narod-niks
			Prav-da-ists	Liquida-tors	
11. No. of financial reports published in the newspapers during entire period . . . . .	3	1	—	—	?(0?)
12. Percentage of above reports showing deficits covered from unstated, i. e., bourgeois sources .	—	—	0	100	?
13. Funds passing through the hands of either of the Duma groups (from October 1913 to June 6, 1914). Percentage of funds obtained from non-workers . . . . .	—	—	6	46	—
14. No. of items of correspondence tacitly passed off as coming from workers when actually taken from bourgeois newspapers without indicating source . . . . .	—	5 (in two issues, Nos. 17 and 19 of <i>Nasha Rabochaya Gazeta</i> )			0
<i>Trade Unions:</i>					
15. No. of trade unions in St. Petersburg in which majority of members (judging by majority on executive boards) sympathize with respective trends . . . . .	14 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> *	3 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> *	—	—	2

\* In one union the *Pravda*-ists and Liquidators had an equal number of supporters.

First of all we shall briefly explain the above figures and then draw the conclusions that follow from them.

It will be best to make the explanations point by point. Point 1. *No* figures showing the number of electors and delegates elected are available. Whoever complains about our using "curia" figures simply makes himself ridiculous, for no other figures are available. The German Social-Democrats measure their successes under the Bismarck franchise law which excludes women and thereby creates a "male" curia!

Point 2. The number of workers' groups which pay and not only "sign resolutions" is the most reliable and true criterion not only of the strength of the trend, but also of its state of organization and its Party spirit.

That is why the Liquidators and the "coteries" betray such subjective dislike for this criterion.

The Liquidators argued: We have, in addition, the Jewish and the Georgian newspapers, but the *Pravda* stands alone. This is not true. Firstly, the Estonian and Lithuanian newspapers are *Pravda*-ist. Secondly, if we take the provinces, is it permissible to forget Moscow? The Moscow workers' newspaper, during 1913, rallied, united 390 workers' groups (*Rabochy*, No. 1, p. 19), whereas the Jewish newspaper *Zeit*, from issue No. 2 (December 29, 1912) to June 1, 1914, united 296 workers' groups (of these 190 were united up to March 20, 1914, and 106 from March 20 to June 1, 1914. Thus, Moscow alone more than "covered" the Liquidators' subjective reference to the *Zeit*!

We invite the Georgian and Armenian comrades to collect data on the Liquidators' newspapers in the Caucasus. How many workers' groups are there? Objective data covering all aspects are needed.

Mistakes in counting the groups may have been made, but only in individual cases. We invite everybody to verify the figures and correct them.

Points 3 and 4 require no explanation. It would be



desirable to initiate an enquiry for the purpose of collecting *new* data from the provinces.

Point 5. The 2,985 Liquidator signatures *include* 1,086 Bundist and 719 Caucasian signatures. It is desirable that the local comrades should verify these figures.

Point 6. The treasurers of the two groups publish reports of *all* funds each group receives for various objects. These figures serve as an exact and objective index of contacts with the workers.

Point 7. Circulation of newspapers. The figures were collected and published by E. Vandervelde but hushed up by the Liquidators and the Liberals (*Kievskaya Mysl*). "Subjectivism." It is desirable that fuller figures be collected, if only for one month.

Points 8 and 9. Here we have an objective illustration of the Liquidators' renunciation of the "underground," i.e., of the Party. But from January 1 to May 13, 1914, receipts from abroad gave the *Pravda*-ists Rbls. 49.79 (one-fourth of one per cent) and the Liquidators Rbls. 1,709.17 (fourteen per cent). Don't say "I can't," say: "I won't"!

Points 10 to 14. These are objective evidence of the dependence of the Liquidators and Narodniks on the bourgeoisie, evidence of their bourgeois character. *Subjectively*, the Liquidators and Narodniks are "Socialists" and "Social-Democrats." *Objectively*, both as regards the substance of their *ideas* as well as the *experience* of the mass movement, they are groups of bourgeois intellectuals which are severing the minority of the workers from the workers' party.

We particularly draw our readers' attention to the way in which the Liquidators fake workers' correspondence. This is an unprecedented, downright fraud! Let all Marxists in the localities expose this fraud and collect objective data (see the *Trudovaya Pravda*, No. 12, June 11, 1914).

Point 15. These figures are particularly important and ought to be supplemented and verified by a separate en-

quiry. We have taken the figures from *Sputnik Rabochevo*, Priboy Publishers, St. Petersburg, 1914. Among the unions included in the Liquidators' list were the Clerks' Union, the Engineers' Draftsmen's Union and the Druggist Employees' Union (at the last election of the Executive of the Printers' Union on April 27, 1914, half the members of the Executive and more than half of the alternate members elected were *Pravda*-ists). The Narodnik list of unions includes the Bakers' Union and the Case-Makers' Union. Aggregate membership about 22,000.

Of the thirteen unions in Moscow, ten are *Pravda*-ist and three indefinite, although they are closer to the *Pravda*-ists. There is not a single Liquidatorist or Narodnik union in Moscow.

The conclusions to be drawn from these objective data is that *Pravda*-ism is the only Marxist, proletarian trend, really independent of the bourgeoisie, and has organized, united, *o v e r* four-fifths of the workers (in 1914, 81.1 per cent of the workers' groups as compared with the Liquidators). Liquidatorism and Narodism are undoubtedly bourgeois-democratic and not working-class trends.

The experience of the mass movement during 1912, 1913 and half of 1914 has entirely and brilliantly confirmed the correctness of the program, tactical and organizational ideas, decisions and line of the *Pravda*-ists. From our conviction that we are on the right road, we should draw the strength for even more intensive efforts.

*Trudovaya Pravda*, No. 25,  
July 9 (June 26), 1914

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**THE PERIOD  
OF THE IMPERIALIST WAR  
THE SECOND REVOLUTION  
IN RUSSIA**



## **THE WAR AND RUSSIAN SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY**

The European war, for which the governments and the bourgeois parties of all countries have been preparing for decades, has broken out. The growth of armaments, the extreme intensification of the struggle for markets in the epoch of the latest, the imperialist, stage of capitalist development in the advanced countries, and the dynastic interests of the most backward East-European monarchies were inevitably bound to lead, and have led, to this war. Seizure of territory and subjugation of foreign nations, ruin of a competing nation and plunder of its wealth, diverting the attention of the working masses from the internal political crises in Russia, Germany, England and other countries, disuniting and nationalist doping of the workers and the extermination of their vanguard with the object of weakening the revolutionary movement of the proletariat—such is the only real meaning, substance and significance of the present war.

On Social-Democracy primarily, rests the duty of disclosing this true meaning of the war and of ruthlessly exposing the falsehood, sophistry and “patriotic” phrasemongering spread by the ruling classes, the landlords and the bourgeoisie, in defence of the war.

At the head of one group of belligerent nations stands the German bourgeoisie. It is fooling the working class and the labouring masses by asserting that it is waging war in

defence of the fatherland, freedom and civilization, for the liberation of the peoples oppressed by tsardom, for the destruction of reactionary tsardom. But, as a matter of fact, this bourgeoisie, which servilely grovels before the Prussian Junkers, headed by Wilhelm II, has always been a most faithful ally of tsardom and an enemy of the revolutionary movement of the workers and peasants of Russia. In reality, whatever the outcome of the war may be, this bourgeoisie will, together with the Junkers, exert every effort to support the tsarist monarchy against a revolution in Russia.

Actually, the German bourgeoisie has launched a predatory campaign against Serbia with the object of subjugating her and throttling the national revolution of the Southern Slavs, at the same time directing the bulk of its military forces against the freer countries, Belgium and France, in order to plunder its richer competitors. Although it is spreading the fable that it is waging a defensive war, the German bourgeoisie, in reality, chose the moment which in its opinion was most propitious for war, taking advantage of its latest improvements in military technique and forestalling the new armaments that had already been planned and decided upon by Russia and France.

The other group of belligerent nations is headed by the British and French bourgeoisie, which is fooling the working class and the labouring masses by asserting that it is waging a war for the defence of their countries, for freedom and civilization against the militarism and despotism of Germany. But, as a matter of fact, this bourgeoisie has long been using its billions to hire the armies of Russian tsardom, the most reactionary and barbarous monarchy in Europe, and to prepare them for an attack on Germany.

In reality, the object of the struggle of the British and French bourgeoisie is to seize the German colonies and

to ruin a competing nation which is distinguished for its more rapid economic development. And, in pursuit of this noble aim, the "advanced" "democratic" nations are helping the savage tsarist regime to draw the noose tighter around Poland, the Ukraine, etc., and to crush the revolution in Russia more thoroughly.

Neither of the two groups of belligerent countries lags behind the other in robbery, atrocities and the infinite brutalities of war; but in order to fool the proletariat and distract its attention from the only real war of liberation, namely, a civil war against the bourgeoisie both of "its own" and of "foreign" countries, in order to further this lofty aim, the bourgeoisie of each country is trying with the help of lying talk about patriotism to extol the significance of its "own" national war and asserts that it is not striving to vanquish the enemy for the sake of plunder and the seizure of territory, but for the sake of "liberating" all other peoples, except its own.

But the more zealously the governments and the bourgeoisie of all countries strive to divide the workers and to pit them against each other, and the more ferociously they employ martial law and military censorship (which even now, in time of war, are applied more stringently against the "internal" than against the foreign enemy) for this lofty purpose, the more urgently is it the duty of the class-conscious proletariat to preserve its class solidarity, its internationalism, its socialist convictions from the orgy of chauvinism of the "patriotic" bourgeois cliques of all countries. The renunciation of this task would mean the renunciation by the class-conscious workers of all their emancipatory and democratic, not to mention socialist, aspirations.

It is with a feeling of deepest chagrin that we have to record that the socialist parties of the leading European countries have not discharged this duty, while the behaviour of the leaders of these parties—particularly of the

German—borders on downright betrayal of the cause of Socialism. At this moment of supreme world-historical importance, the majority of the leaders of the present, the Second (1889-1914), Socialist International are trying to substitute nationalism for Socialism. Owing to their behaviour, the workers' parties of these countries did not oppose the criminal conduct of the governments but called upon the working class to *identify* its position with that of the imperialist governments. The leaders of the International committed an act of treachery towards Socialism in voting for war credits, in seconding the chauvinist ("patriotic") slogans of the bourgeoisie of their "own" countries, in justifying and defending war, in entering the bourgeois Cabinets of belligerent countries, etc., etc. The most influential socialist leaders, and the most influential organs of the socialist press of present-day Europe, hold chauvinistic bourgeois and liberal views, and not socialist views. The responsibility for disgracing Socialism in this way rests primarily on the German Social-Democrats, who were the strongest and most influential party in the Second International. But neither can one justify the French Socialists, who accepted ministerial posts in the government of the very bourgeoisie which betrayed its country and allied itself with Bismarck to crush the Commune.

The German and Austrian Social-Democrats try to justify their support of the war by arguing that they are thereby fighting Russian tsardom. We, the Russian Social-Democrats, declare that we consider such a justification sheer sophistry. During the past few years, the revolutionary movement against tsardom in our country has again assumed tremendous proportions. This movement has always been led by the Russian working class. The slogan of the political strikes involving millions of workers that took place during the past few years was: overthrow of tsardom and establishment of a democratic



republic. On the very eve of the war, Poincaré, the President of the French Republic, while on his visit to Nicholas II, had the opportunity to see barricades in the streets of St. Petersburg built by the hands of Russian workers. The Russian proletariat has not shrunk from any sacrifice to rid humanity of the disgrace of the tsarist monarchy. But we must say that if anything can, under certain conditions, delay the fall of tsardom, if anything can help tsardom in its struggle against the whole democracy of Russia, it is the present war, which has placed the moneybags of the British, French and Russian bourgeoisie at the disposal of tsardom for its reactionary aims. And if anything can hinder the revolutionary struggle of the Russian working class against tsardom, it is the behaviour of the German and Austrian Social-Democratic leaders, which the chauvinist press of Russia is continually holding up to us as an example.

Even if we assume that German Social-Democracy was so weak that it was compelled to refrain from all revolutionary action, even then it should not have joined the chauvinist camp, it should not have taken steps which caused the Italian Socialists to declare with justice that the leaders of the German Social-Democrats were dishonouring the banner of the proletarian International.

Our Party, the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, has borne, and will yet bear, great sacrifices in connection with the war. The whole of our legal workers' press has been suppressed. The majority of the labour unions have been closed, a large number of our comrades have been arrested and exiled. But our parliamentary representatives—the Russian Social-Democratic Labour group in the State Duma—considered it to be their imperative socialist duty not to vote for the war credits and even to walk out of the Duma, in order the more energetically to express their protest; they considered it their duty to brand

the policy of the European governments as an imperialist one. And notwithstanding the fact that the oppression of the tsar's government has increased tenfold, the Social-Democratic workers of Russia are already publishing their first illegal manifestoes against the war and thus doing their duty to democracy and to the International.

While the representatives of revolutionary Social-Democracy, in the person of the minority of the German Social-Democrats and the best Social-Democrats in the neutral countries, are conscious of a burning sense of shame over this collapse of the Second International;<sup>66</sup> while voices of Socialists are being raised both in England and in France against the chauvinism of the majority of the Social-Democratic parties; while the opportunists, as represented, for instance, by the German *Socialist Monthly* (*Sozialistische Monatshefte*), which has long held a national-liberal position, are justly celebrating their victory over European Socialism—the worst possible service to the proletariat is being rendered by those who vacillate between opportunism and revolutionary Social-Democracy (like the “Centre” in the German Social-Democratic Party), by those who attempt to hush up the collapse of the Second International or to cover it up with diplomatic phrases.

Quite the contrary, this collapse must be frankly admitted and its causes understood in order to be able to build a new and more lasting socialist unity of the workers of all countries.

The opportunists have nullified the decisions of the Stuttgart, Copenhagen and Basle congresses, which made it binding on the Socialists of all countries to fight chauvinism under all conditions, which made it binding on Socialists to retaliate to every war begun by the bourgeoisie and the governments by intense propaganda for civil war and for social revolution. The collapse of the

Second International is the collapse of opportunism, which grew out of the peculiarities of a now past (the so-called "peaceful") historical epoch, and which in recent years has practically come to dominate the International. The opportunists have long been preparing the ground for this collapse by rejecting socialist revolution and substituting for it bourgeois reformism; by repudiating the class struggle with its inevitable transformation into civil war at certain moments, and by preaching class collaboration; by preaching bourgeois chauvinism under the guise of patriotism and defence of the fatherland, and ignoring or repudiating the fundamental truth of Socialism, long ago expressed in the *Communist Manifesto*, namely, that the workers have no country; by confining themselves in their struggle against militarism to a sentimental, philistine point of view, instead of recognizing the need for a revolutionary war of the proletarians of all countries against the bourgeoisie of all countries; by making a fetish of the necessary utilization of bourgeois parliamentarism and bourgeois legality and forgetting that illegal forms of organization and agitation are obligatory in times of crises. That natural "supplement" of opportunism—one equally bourgeois and hostile to the proletarian, i.e., the Marxist, point of view—namely, the anarcho-syndicalist trend, has been marked by a no less shameful smugness in seconding the slogans of chauvinism in the present crisis.

It is impossible to carry out the tasks of Socialism at the present time, it is impossible to achieve real international unity of the workers, without a determined rupture with opportunism and explaining to the masses the inevitability of its bankruptcy.

It must be the prime task of the Social-Democrats in every country to fight the chauvinism of their own country. In Russia the bourgeois liberals (the "Constitutional-Democrats") have been wholly, and the Narodniks—down

to the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the "Right" Social-Democrats—partly infected by this chauvinism. (In particular, it is essential to stigmatize the chauvinist utterances of E. Smirnov, P. Maslov and G. Plekhanov, for example, utterances which have been taken up and widely utilized by the bourgeois "patriotic" press.)

Under present conditions, it is impossible to determine, from the standpoint of the international proletariat, the defeat of which of the two groups of belligerent nations would be the lesser evil for Socialism. But for us, the Russian Social-Democrats, there cannot be the slightest doubt that from the standpoint of the working class and of the labouring masses of all the nations of Russia, the lesser evil would be the defeat of the tsarist monarchy, the most reactionary and barbarous of governments, which is oppressing the greatest number of nations and the largest mass of the population of Europe and Asia.

The immediate political slogan of the Social-Democrats of Europe must be the formation of a republican United States of Europe, but in contrast to the bourgeoisie, which is ready to "promise" anything in order to draw the proletariat into the general current of chauvinism, the Social-Democrats will explain that this slogan is utterly false and senseless without the revolutionary overthrow of the German, Austrian and Russian monarchies.

In Russia, in view of the fact that this country is the most backward and has not yet completed its bourgeois revolution, the task of the Social-Democrats is, as heretofore, to achieve the three fundamental conditions for consistent democratic reform, viz., a democratic republic (with complete equality and self-determination for all nations), confiscation of the landed estates, and an 8-hour day. But in all the advanced countries the war has placed on the order of the day the slogan of socialist revolution, and this slogan becomes the more urgent, the more the

burdens of war press upon the shoulders of the proletariat, and the more active its role must become in the restoration of Europe after the horrors of the present "patriotic" barbarism amidst the gigantic technical progress of big capitalism. The fact that the bourgeoisie is using wartime legislation to completely gag the proletariat makes it absolutely necessary for the latter to create illegal forms of agitation and organization. Let the opportunists "preserve" the legal organizations at the price of betraying their convictions; the revolutionary Social-Democrats will utilize the organizational training and connections of the working class to create illegal forms of fighting for Socialism that are suitable for an epoch of crisis, and to unite the workers not with the chauvinist bourgeoisie of their various countries, but with the workers of all countries. The proletarian International has not perished and will not perish. In spite of all obstacles, the masses of the workers will create a new International. The present triumph of opportunism will be short-lived. The greater the sacrifices the war imposes, the clearer will it become to the mass of the workers that the opportunists have betrayed the workers' cause and that the weapons must be turned against the government and the bourgeoisie of every country.

The transformation of the present imperialist war into a civil war is the only correct proletarian slogan; it was indicated by the experience of the Commune and outlined by the Basle resolution (1912), and it logically follows from all the conditions of an imperialist war among highly developed bourgeois countries. However difficult such a transformation may appear at any given moment, Socialists will never relinquish systematic, persistent and undeviating preparatory work in this direction once war has become a fact.

Only in this way can the proletariat shake off its dependence on the chauvinist bourgeoisie, and, in

one form or another, more or less rapidly, take decisive steps towards the real freedom of nations and towards Socialism.

Long live the international fraternity of the workers against the chauvinism and patriotism of the bourgeoisie of all countries!

Long live a proletarian International, freed from opportunism!

*Central Committee of the Russian  
Social-Democratic Labour Party*

*Sotsial-Demokrat*, No. 33,  
November 1, 1914

V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*,  
Fourth Russian Edition,  
Vol. XXI, pp. 9-18

## **THE NATIONAL PRIDE OF THE GREAT RUSSIANS**

What a lot of talk and argument and shouting there is about nationality, about the fatherland! Liberal and radical Cabinet Ministers in England, a multitude of "advanced" publicists in France (who turn out to be in complete agreement with the reactionary publicists), a host of official, Cadet and progressive (including several Narodnik and "Marxist") scribes in Russia—all in a thousand different keys laud the freedom and independence of their "country," the grandeur of the principle of national independence. It is difficult to distinguish here, where the venal eulogizer of the hangman Nicholas Romanov, or of the torturers of Negroes and the inhabitants of India, ends, and where the ordinary philistine who, owing to stupidity or spinelessness, is swimming "with the stream," begins. Nor is that important. We see a very wide and very deep ideological trend, the roots of which are very firmly connected with the interests of Messrs. the landlords and capitalists of the Great-Power nations. On the propaganda of ideas advantageous to these classes scores and hundreds of millions are spent every year: by no means a small mill, which takes its waters from all sources, from the convinced chauvinist Menshikov to chauvinists due to opportunism or spinelessness like Plekhanov, Maslov, Rubanovich, Smirnov, Kropotkin and Burtsev.

Let us Great-Russian Social-Democrats also try to define our attitude towards this ideological trend. It would be unseemly for us representatives of a Great-Power nation in the far east of Europe, and a good share of Asia, to forget the enormous significance of the national question—particularly in a country which is justly called the “prison of nations”—at a time when it is precisely in the far east of Europe and in Asia that capitalism is rousing a number of “new” big and small nations to life and consciousness; at a moment when the tsarist monarchy has placed under arms millions of Great Russians and “aliens” for the purpose of “deciding” a number of national questions in the interests of the Council of the United Nobility and of the Guchkovs and Krestovnikovs, Dolgorukovs, Kutlers and Rodichevs.

Is the sense of national pride alien to us, Great-Russian, class-conscious proletarians? Of course not! We love our language and our country, we are doing more than anybody to raise *her* toiling masses (i.e., nine-tenths of *her* population) to the level of the conscious life of democrats and Socialists. It pains us more than anybody to see and feel the outrage, oppression and humiliation inflicted on our splendid country by the tsarist hangmen, the nobles and the capitalists. We are proud of the fact that these outrages have roused resistance in our midst, the midst of the Great Russians; that from *this* midst came Radishchev, the Decembrists and the revolutionary commoners of the 'seventies; that the Great-Russian working class in 1905 created a mighty, revolutionary mass party; that at the same time the Great-Russian muzhik began to become a democrat, and began to overthrow the priest and the landlord.

We remember that half a century ago the Great-Russian democrat Chernyshevsky, devoting his life to the cause of the revolution, said: “a miserable nation, a



nation of slaves, from top to bottom—all slaves.” The avowed and unavowed Great-Russian slaves (slaves of the tsarist monarchy) do not like to recall these words. Yet, in our opinion, these were words of genuine love of our country, love saddened by the absence of a revolutionary spirit among the masses of the Great-Russian people. This spirit was absent at that time. There is little of it now; but it exists. We are filled with a sense of national pride because the Great-Russian nation has *also* created a revolutionary class, has *also* proved that it is capable of showing mankind great examples of struggle for freedom and for Socialism, and not only great pogroms, rows of gallows, dungeons, great famines and great servility towards priests, tsars, landlords and capitalists.

We are filled with a sense of national pride, and for that very reason we *particularly* hate *our* slavish past (when the noble landlords led the muzhiks to war in order to crush the freedom of Hungary, Poland, Persia and China), and our slavish present, when these same landlords, backed by the capitalists, are leading us to war in order to throttle Poland and the Ukraine, in order to crush the democratic movement in Persia and in China, and in order to strengthen the gang of Romanovs, Bobrinskys and Purishkeviches who are disgracing our Great-Russian national dignity. A man is not to blame for being born a slave; but a slave who not only shuns the striving for freedom but justifies and embellishes his slavery (for example, calls the throttling of Poland, the Ukraine, etc., “defence of the fatherland” of the Great Russians)—such a slave is a menial and a cad, who inspires legitimate anger, contempt and disgust.

“No nation can be free if it oppresses other nations,” said the greatest representatives of consistent democracy of the nineteenth century, Marx and Engels, who became the teachers of the revolutionary proletariat. And we Great-

Russian workers, filled with a sense of national pride, want at all costs a free and independent, democratic, republican, proud Great Russia, which shall base its relations with its neighbours on the human principle of equality, and not on the feudal principle of privilege, which is degrading to a great nation. Precisely because we want this, we say: it is impossible, in the twentieth century, in Europe (even in Far-Eastern Europe), to "defend the fatherland" except by fighting with all revolutionary means the monarchy, the landlords and capitalists of our *own* fatherland, i.e., the *worst* enemies of our country; that Great Russians cannot "defend their fatherland" unless they desire the defeat of tsarism in any war, as being the least evil for nine-tenths of the population of Great Russia; for tsarism is not only oppressing these nine-tenths of the population economically and politically, but is also demoralizing, degrading, dishonouring and prostituting them by teaching it to oppress other nations, teaching it to cover up its shame with the aid of hypocritical, pseudopatriotic phrases.

We may be told that apart from tsarism, and under its wing, another historical force has arisen and become strong, Great-Russian capitalism, which is performing progressive work by economically centralizing and uniting vast regions. This objection, however, does not excuse, on the contrary, it still more strongly accuses our Socialist-chauvinists, who should be called tsarist-Purishkevich Socialists (just as Marx called the Lassalleans, Royal-Prussian Socialists). Let us assume that history will decide the question in favour of Great-Russian imperialist capitalism, and against the hundred and one small nations. This is not impossible, for the whole history of capital is a history of violence and plunder, blood and mud. We are not in favour of preserving small nations at all costs; *other conditions being equal*, we are absolutely in favour of centralization and are opposed to the philistine ideal

of federal relationships. Even in the case we have assumed, however, firstly, it is not our business, not the business of democrats (let alone of Socialists) to help Romanov-Bobrinsky-Purishkevich to throttle the Ukraine, etc. Bismarck, in his own, Junker, way, performed a progressive historical task; but he would be a fine "Marxist," indeed, who, on these grounds, thought of justifying socialist support for Bismarck! Moreover, Bismarck facilitated economic development by uniting the scattered Germans who were oppressed by other nations. The economic prosperity and rapid development of Great Russia, however, requires that the country be liberated from the violence the Great Russians perpetrate against other nations—our admirers of the truly Russian near-Bismarcks forget this difference.

Secondly, if history decides the question in favour of Great-Russian imperialist capitalism, it follows that all the greater will be the *socialist* role of the Great-Russian proletariat as the principal driving force of the Communist revolution to which capitalism gives rise. And the proletarian revolution requires the prolonged education of the workers in the spirit of the *completest* national equality and fraternity. Hence, from the point of view of the interests of precisely the Great-Russian proletariat, the prolonged education of the masses is required so that they may most resolutely, consistently, boldly and in a revolutionary manner champion complete equality and the right of self-determination for all the nations oppressed by the Great Russians. The interests (not in the slavish sense) of the national pride of the Great Russians coincide with the *socialist* interests of the Great-Russian (and all other) proletarians. Our model will always be Marx, who, having lived in England for decades, became half English and demanded the freedom and national independence of Ireland in the interests of the socialist movement of the English workers.

In the latter case that we have assumed, our home-grown Socialist-chauvinists, Plekhanov, etc., etc., will not only prove to be traitors to their country, free and democratic Great Russia, but also traitors to the proletarian brotherhood of all the nations of Russia, i.e., to the cause of Socialism.

*Sotsial-Demokrat*, No. 35,  
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V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*,  
Fourth Russian Edition,  
Vol. XXI, pp. 84-88

## THE UNITED STATES OF EUROPE SLOGAN

In No. 40 of the *Sotsial-Demokrat* we reported that the conference of the foreign sections of our Party had decided to defer the question of the "United States of Europe" slogan pending a discussion in the press on the *economic* side of the question.\*

The debate on this question at our conference assumed a one-sidedly political character. Perhaps this was partly due to the fact that the Manifesto of the Central Committee directly formulated this slogan as a political one ("the immediate *political* slogan. . ." it says there), and not only did it put forward the slogan of a republican United States of Europe, but expressly emphasized the point that this slogan is senseless and false "without the revolutionary overthrow of the German, Austrian and Russian monarchies."

It would be absolutely wrong to object to such a presentation of the question *merely* from the standpoint of a political estimation of the particular slogan—as for instance, that it obscures or weakens, etc., the slogan of a socialist revolution. Political changes in a truly democratic direction, and political revolutions all the more, can never, not under any circumstances, obscure or weaken the slogan of a socialist revolution. On the contrary, they always bring it nearer, widen the basis for it, draw new sections of the petty bourgeoisie and the semiproletarian masses into the socialist struggle. On the other hand, political revolutions are inevitable in the course of the socialist revolution, which

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\* Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. XXI, p. 137.—Ed.

must not be regarded as a single act, but as an epoch of turbulent political and economic upheavals, of the most acute class struggle, civil war, revolutions, and counterrevolutions.

But while the slogan of a republican United States of Europe, placed in conjunction with the revolutionary overthrow of the three most reactionary monarchies in Europe, headed by the Russian, is quite invulnerable as a political slogan, there still remains the highly important question of its economic meaning and significance. From the standpoint of the economic conditions of imperialism—i.e., export of capital and the fact that the world has been divided up among the “advanced” and “civilized” colonial powers—a United States of Europe, under capitalism, is either impossible or reactionary.

Capital has become international and monopolistic. The world has been divided up among a handful of Great Powers, i.e., powers successful in the great plunder and oppression of nations. The four Great Powers of Europe: England, France, Russia and Germany, with a population ranging from 250,000,000 to 300,000,000 with an area of about 7,000,000 square kilometres, possess colonies with a population of *almost half a billion* (494,500,000), with an area of 64,600,000 square kilometres, i.e., almost half the surface of the globe (133,000,000 square kilometres, not including the Arctic region). Add to this the three Asiatic states, China, Turkey and Persia, which are now being torn to pieces by the marauders who are waging a war of “liberation,” namely, Japan, Russia, England and France. In those three Asiatic states, which may be called semicolonies (in reality they are now nine-tenths colonies), there are 360,000,000 inhabitants and their area is 14,500,000 square kilometres (almost one and one-half times the area of the whole of Europe).

Further, England, France and Germany have invested capital abroad to the amount of no less than 70,000 million

rubles. The function of securing a "legitimate" profit from this tidy sum, a profit exceeding 3,000 million rubles annually, is performed by the national committees of millionaires, termed governments, which are equipped with armies and navies and which "place" the sons and brothers of "Mr. Billion" in the colonies and semicolonies in the capacity of viceroys, consuls, ambassadors, officials of all kinds, priests and other leeches.

This is how the plunder of about a billion of the earth's population by a handful of Great Powers is organized in the epoch of the highest development of capitalism. No other organization is possible under capitalism. Give up colonies, "spheres of influence," export of capital? To think that this is possible means sinking to the level of some mediocre parson who preaches to the rich every Sunday about the lofty principles of Christianity and advises them to give to the poor, well, if not several billions, at least several hundred rubles yearly.

A United States of Europe under capitalism is tantamount to an agreement to divide up the colonies. Under capitalism, however, no other basis, no other principle of division is possible except force. A billionaire cannot share the "national income" of a capitalist country with anyone except in proportion to the capital invested (with an extra bonus thrown in, so that the largest capital may receive more than its due). Capitalism is private property in the means of production, and anarchy in production. To preach a "just" division of income on such a basis is Proudhonism, is stupid philistinism. Division cannot take place except in "proportion to strength." And strength changes with the progress of economic development. After 1871 Germany grew strong three or four times faster than England and France; Japan, about ten times faster than Russia. There is and there can be no other way of testing the real strength of a capitalist state than that of war. War does not contradict the principles of private property—on

the contrary, it is a direct and inevitable outcome of these principles. Under capitalism the even economic growth of individual enterprises, or individual states, is impossible. Under capitalism, there are no other means of restoring the periodically disturbed equilibrium than crises in industry and wars in politics.

Of course, *temporary* agreements between capitalists and between the powers are possible. In this sense a United States of Europe is possible as an agreement between the *European* capitalists... but what for? Only for the purpose of jointly suppressing Socialism in Europe, of jointly protecting colonial booty *against* Japan and America, which feel badly treated by the present division of colonies, and which, for the last half century, have grown strong infinitely faster than backward, monarchist Europe, which is beginning to decay with age. Compared with the United States of America, Europe as a whole signifies economic stagnation. On the present economic basis, i.e., under capitalism, a United States of Europe would mean the organization of reaction to retard the more rapid development of America. The times when the cause of democracy and Socialism was associated with Europe alone have gone forever.

A United States of the World (not of Europe alone) is the state form of the union and freedom of nations which we associate with Socialism—until the complete victory of Communism brings about the total disappearance of the state, including the democratic state. As a separate slogan, however, the slogan of a United States of the World would hardly be a correct one, first, because it merges with Socialism; second, because it may be wrongly interpreted to mean that the victory of Socialism in a single country is impossible, and it may also create misconceptions as to the relations of such a country to the others.

Uneven economic and political development is an absolute law of capitalism. Hence, the victory of Socialism is



possible first in several or even in one capitalist country, taken singly. The victorious proletariat of that country, having expropriated the capitalists and organized its own socialist production, would stand up *against* the rest of the world, the capitalist world, attracting to its cause the oppressed classes of other countries, raising revolts in those countries against the capitalists, and in the event of necessity coming out even with armed force against the exploiting classes and their states. The political form of society in which the proletariat is victorious by overthrowing the bourgeoisie, will be a democratic republic, which will more and more centralize the forces of the proletariat of the given nation, or nations, in the struggle against the states that have not yet gone over to Socialism. The abolition of classes is impossible without the dictatorship of the oppressed class, the proletariat. The free union of nations in Socialism is impossible without a more or less prolonged and stubborn struggle of the socialist republics against the backward states.

It is for these reasons and after repeated debates at the conference of the sections of the R.S.D.L.P. abroad, and after the conference, that the editors of the Central Organ have come to the conclusion that the United States of Europe slogan is incorrect.

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V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*,  
Fourth Russian Edition,  
Vol. XXI, pp. 308-11

## OPPORTUNISM AND THE COLLAPSE OF THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL

### I

Has the Second International really ceased to exist? Its most authoritative representatives, like Kautsky and Vandervelde, stubbornly deny it. Their point of view is: nothing has happened except a rupture of relations; everything is as it should be.

To get to the truth of the matter, we will turn to the *Manifesto of the Basle Congress* of 1912, which applies precisely to the present imperialist World War and was accepted by all the socialist parties of the world. It should be noted that not a single Socialist will dare, in theory, to deny the necessity of giving a concrete, historical appraisal of every war.

Now that war has broken out, neither the avowed opportunists nor the Kautskyites dare repudiate the Basle Manifesto or compare the conduct of the socialist parties during the war with the demands contained in it. Why? Because the Manifesto completely exposes both.

There is not a single word in the Basle Manifesto about the defence of the fatherland, or about the difference between a war of aggression and a war of defence, nor a single word about all that which the opportunists and Kautskyites\* of Germany and of the Quadruple Entente

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\* This refers not to the personalities of Kautsky's followers in Germany, but to the international type of pseudo Marxist who vacillates between opportunism and radicalism, but in reality serves only as a fig leaf for opportunism.

are shouting to the world at all the crossroads. The Manifesto could not say anything of the kind, because what it does say absolutely precludes the application of such concepts. It very concretely refers to the series of economic and political conflicts which for decades had prepared the ground for the present war, conflicts which became quite apparent in 1912, and which brought about the war in 1914. The Manifesto recalls the Russo-Austrian conflict for "hegemony in the Balkans"; the conflicts between England, France and Germany (among *all* these countries!) over their "policy of conquest in Asia Minor"; the Austro-Italian conflict over the "striving for dominion" in Albania, etc. In short, the Manifesto defines all these conflicts as conflicts based on "capitalist imperialism." Thus, the Manifesto very clearly recognizes the predatory, imperialist, reactionary, slaveowner character of the present war, i.e., a character which makes the admissibility of defending the fatherland nonsensical in theory and absurd in practice. A struggle is going on among big sharks who want to gobble up other people's "fatherlands." The Manifesto draws the inevitable conclusions from undisputed historical facts: this war "cannot be justified in the slightest degree by the pretext of being in the interest of the people"; it is being prepared for "in the interests of the profits of the capitalists and the ambitions of dynasties." It would be a "crime" if the workers began to "shoot each other." That is what the Manifesto says.

The epoch of capitalist imperialism is the epoch of ripe and overripe capitalism, which is on the eve of collapse, which is sufficiently ripe to make way for Socialism. The period between 1789 and 1871 was the epoch of progressive capitalism, when on the order of the day of history were the tasks of overthrowing feudalism and absolutism, and liberation from foreign yoke. On these grounds, and on these *alone*, was "defence of the fatherland," i.e., struggle against oppression, permissible. This term would be appli-

cable even now to a war *against* the imperialist Great Powers; but it would be absurd to apply it to a war *among* the imperialist Great Powers, to a war to determine who will be able to rob the Balkan countries, Asia Minor, etc., most. It is not surprising, therefore, that the "Socialists" who advocate "defence of the fatherland" in the present war shun the Basle Manifesto as a thief shuns the place where he has committed a theft. The Manifesto proves that they are social-chauvinists, i.e., Socialists in words, but chauvinists in deeds, who are helping their "own" bourgeoisie to rob other countries, to enslave other nations. The quintessence of the term "chauvinism" is precisely defence of one's "own" fatherland, even when it is striving to enslave other people's fatherlands.

The recognition of the war as a war for national liberation leads to the adoption of one set of tactics; its recognition as an imperialist war leads to the adoption of another set of tactics. The Manifesto clearly points to the latter. The war, it says, "will lead to an economic and political crisis," and "advantage" of this must be taken, not to mitigate the crisis, not to defend the fatherland, but, on the contrary, to "*rouse*" the masses, to "hasten the downfall of capitalist class rule." It is impossible to hasten something for which the historical conditions have not ripened. The Manifesto recognized that the social revolution was *possible*, that the prerequisites for it *had ripened*, that it would break out precisely *in connection* with war: "the ruling classes" are afraid of the "proletarian revolution," says the Manifesto, referring to the examples of the *Paris Commune* and the *Revolution of 1905* in Russia, i.e., to the examples of mass strikes and of civil war. It is false to say, as Kautsky does, that the socialist attitude to the *present* war was not defined. This question was not only discussed, but decided in Basle, where the tactics of revolutionary proletarian mass struggle were adopted.

It is outrageous hypocrisy to ignore the Basle Manifesto, as a whole, or its most essential parts, and to quote instead the speeches of leaders, or the resolutions passed by various parties, which, in the first place, *preceded* the Basle Congress, secondly, were not the decisions of the parties of the whole world, and thirdly, referred to various *possible* wars, but not to the present war. The essence of the question is the fact that the epoch of national wars among the European Great Powers has been superseded by an epoch of imperialist wars among them, and that the Basle Manifesto for the first time had to recognize this fact officially.

It would be a mistake to think that the Basle Manifesto was mere declamation, an official phrase, or an empty threat. That is how those whom the Manifesto exposes would like to interpret it. But it would be wrong to do so. The Manifesto is but the result of the great propaganda work carried on throughout the entire epoch of the Second International; it is but a summary of all that the Socialists have disseminated among the masses in the hundreds of thousands of speeches, articles and manifestoes they have delivered and written in all languages. It merely repeats what *Jules Guesde*, for example, wrote in 1899, when he condemned socialist ministerialism in the event of war: he wrote of war provoked by the "capitalist pirates" (*En Gardel*, p. 175); it merely repeats what *Kautsky* wrote in 1909 in his *Road to Power*, where he admitted that the "peaceful" epoch was drawing to a close and that the epoch of wars and revolutions was beginning. To represent the Basle Manifesto as a mere collection of phrases, or as a mistake, is tantamount to regarding the whole of the work that Socialists have been conducting for the last twenty-five years as a collection of phrases, or a mistake. The contradiction between the Manifesto and its non-application is so intolerable for the opportunists and Kautskyites for the very reason that it reveals the profound contradictions

inherent in the work of the Second International. The relatively "peaceful" character of the period between 1871 and 1914 first of all fostered opportunism as a *mood*, then as a *trend*, and finally, as a *group or stratum* of the labour bureaucracy and petty-bourgeois fellow-travellers. These elements were able to gain the upper hand in the working-class movement only by recognizing, in words, revolutionary aims and revolutionary tactics. They were able to win the confidence of the masses only by solemnly vowing that all this "peaceful" work was only *preparation* for the proletarian revolution. This contradiction was an abscess which had to burst some day, and it has burst. The whole question is: is it necessary to try, as Kautsky and Co. are doing, to reinject the pus into the body for the sake of "unity" (with the pus), or whether, in order to help the body of the working-class movement fully to recover, to remove the pus as quickly and as thoroughly as possible, notwithstanding the acute pain temporarily caused by the process.

The betrayal of Socialism by those who voted for war credits, entered Cabinets and advocated defence of the fatherland in 1914-15 is obvious. Only hypocrites can deny this fact. It must be explained.

## II

It would be absurd to regard the whole question as one of personalities. What has opportunism to do with it when men like *Plekhanov*, and *Guesde*, etc.?—asks *Kautsky* (*Neue Zeit*, May 28, 1915). What has opportunism to do with it when *Kautsky*, etc.?—replies *Axelrod* in the name of the opportunists of the Quadruple Entente (*Die Krise der Sozialdemokratie*, Zurich, 1915, p. 21). All this is a farce. To explain the crisis of the whole movement it is necessary, firstly, to examine the economic significance of a given policy; secondly, the ideas underlying it; and

*thirdly, its connection with the history of the various trends in the socialist movement.*

What is the economic essence of defencism in the war of 1914-15? The bourgeoisie of *all* the Great Powers are waging the war for the purpose of partitioning and exploiting the world, for the purpose of oppressing other nations. A few crumbs of the huge profits of the bourgeoisie may fall to the share of a small circle of the labour bureaucracy, the labour aristocracy, and the petty-bourgeois fellow-travellers. The class basis of social-chauvinism and of opportunism is the same, namely, the alliance between a thin stratum of privileged workers and "their" national bourgeoisie *against* the masses of the working class; the alliance between the lackeys of the bourgeoisie and the bourgeoisie *against* the class the latter is exploiting.

*Opportunism and social-chauvinism have the same political content, namely, class collaboration, repudiation of the dictatorship of the proletariat, repudiation of revolutionary action, unconditional recognition of bourgeois legality, lack of confidence in the proletariat, confidence in the bourgeoisie. Social-chauvinism is the direct continuation and consummation of English liberal-labour politics, of Millerandism and Bernsteinism.*

The struggle between the two main trends in the working-class movement, between revolutionary Socialism and opportunist Socialism, fills the entire epoch from 1889 to 1914. At the present time also, in every country, there are two main trends which diverge on the question of the attitude to be taken towards the war. Let us not resort to the bourgeois and opportunist method of referring to personalities. Let us take the *trends* observed in a number of countries. Let us take ten European countries: Germany, England, Russia, Italy, Holland, Sweden, Bulgaria, Switzerland, Belgium and France. In the first eight countries the division into an opportunist and a revolutionary trend corresponds to the division into social-chauvinists and

internationalists. In Germany the strongholds of social-chauvinism are: the *Sozialistische Monatshefte* and Legien and Co.; in England it is the Fabians and the Labour Party (the I.L.P. has always been in alliance with them; it supported their organ, and in this alliance it was always weaker than the social-chauvinists, whereas in the B.S.P. the internationalists form three-sevenths of the membership); in Russia this trend is represented by *Nasha Zarya* (now *Nashe Dyelo*), by the Organization Committee, and by the Duma group under Chkheidze's leadership; in Italy it is represented by the reformists with Bissolati at their head; in Holland by Troelstra's party; in Sweden by the majority of the Party led by Branting; in Bulgaria by the so-called "broad" Socialists; in Switzerland by Greulich and Co. It is precisely among the revolutionary Social-Democrats in *all* these countries that more or less sharp protests against social-chauvinism have already been heard. Only two countries form an exception, France and Belgium, where internationalism also exists, but is very weak.

Social-chauvinism is consummated opportunism. It is opportunism that has ripened for an open, often vulgar, alliance with the bourgeoisie and the General Staffs. It is this alliance that gives it great strength and the monopoly of the legal printed word and of deceiving the masses. *It is absurd to go on regarding opportunism as an intra-Party phenomenon.* It is absurd to think of carrying out the Basle resolution in conjunction with David, Legien, Hyndman, Plekhanov and Webb. Unity with the social-chauvinists means unity with one's "own" national bourgeoisie, which exploits other nations; it means splitting the international proletariat. This does not mean that an immediate rupture with the opportunists is possible everywhere; it means only that historically this rupture has matured; that it is necessary and inevitable for the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat; that history, which has



led us from "peaceful" capitalism to imperialist capitalism, has prepared for this rupture. *Volentem ducunt fata, nolentem trahunt*.\*

### III

The shrewd representatives of the bourgeoisie understand this perfectly. That is why they are so lavish in their praise of the present socialist parties, headed by the "defenders of the fatherland," i.e., defenders of imperialist robbery. That is why the governments reward the social-chauvinist leaders either with ministerial posts (in France and England), or with a monopoly of unhindered legal existence (in Germany and Russia). That is why in Germany, where the Social-Democratic Party was strongest and where its transformation into a national-liberal *counter-revolutionary* labour party has been most obvious, things have got to the stage where the public prosecutor regards the struggle between the "minority" and the "majority" as "incitement to class hatred"! That is why the shrewd opportunists are concerned most of all with the preservation of the former "unity" of the old parties, which rendered such great service to the bourgeoisie in 1914-15. The views of these opportunists of all countries of the world were expounded with a frankness worthy of gratitude by a member of German Social-Democracy in an article signed "Monitor" which appeared in April 1915, in the reactionary magazine *Preussische Jahrbücher*. Monitor thinks that it would be very dangerous for the bourgeoisie if Social-Democracy moved *still further to the Right*: "It must preserve its character as a labour party with socialist ideals; for on the day it gives this up a new party will arise, which will adopt the program that the old, previous party had abandoned and give it a still more radical formulation." (*Preussische Jahrbücher*, 1915, No. 4, pp. 50-51.)

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\* The fates lead the willing, drag the unwilling.—*Tr.*

Monitor hit the nail on the head. This is exactly what the English Liberals and the French Radicals have always wanted: revolutionary-sounding phrases for the purpose of deceiving the masses, for the purpose of inducing them to place their trust in the Lloyd Georges, the Sembats, the Renaudels, the Legiens, and the Kautskys, in the men capable of preaching "defence of the fatherland" in a predatory war.

But Monitor represents only one variety of opportunism: the frank, crude, cynical variety. The others act in a stealthy, subtle, "honest" manner. Engels once said that "honest" opportunists are the most dangerous for the working class. . . . Here is one example:

*Kautsky*, in the *Neue Zeit* (November 26, 1915), writes: "The opposition to the majority is growing; the masses are in an opposition mood." "After the war (only *after* the war? *N. L.*) class antagonisms will become so sharp that radicalism will gain the upper hand among the masses." "After the war (only *after* the war? *N. L.*) we will be menaced by the desertion of the radical elements from the Party and their influx into the party of antiparliamentary (?? this should be taken to mean extraparlimentary) mass action." "Thus, our Party is splitting up into two extreme camps, having nothing in common with each other." For the sake of saving unity Kautsky tries to persuade the majority in the Reichstag to allow the minority to make a few radical parliamentary speeches. That means that Kautsky wishes, with the aid of a few radical parliamentary speeches, to reconcile the revolutionary masses with the opportunists, who have "nothing in common" with revolution, who have long had the leadership of the trade unions, and now, relying on their close alliance with the bourgeoisie and the government, have also captured the leadership of the party. What material difference is there between this and Monitor's "program"? None, except for sentimental phrases which prostitute Marxism.

At a meeting of the Reichstag group held on March 18, 1915, *Wurm*, a Kautskyite, "warned" the group against "pulling the strings too tight; there is growing opposition among the masses of the workers to the majority of the group; it is necessary to keep to the Marxian" (?! probably a misprint: this should read "the Monitor") "Centre." (*Klassenkampf gegen den Krieg! Material zum "Fall Liebknecht."* Als Manuskript gedruckt.\* P. 67.) We see, therefore, that the revolutionary sentiment of the *masses* was admitted as a *fact* on behalf of *all* the Kautskyites (the so-called "Centre") *as early as March, 1915!!* And eight and a half months later, Kautsky again comes forward with the proposal to "reconcile" the masses who want to fight the opportunist, counterrevolutionary party—and he wants to do this with the aid of a few revolutionary-sounding phrases!!

War often has its uses in that it exposes what is rotten and casts off convention.

Let us compare the English Fabians with the German Kautskyites. This is what a *real* Marxist, Frederick Engels, wrote about the former on January 18, 1893: "... a gang of place hunters, shrewd enough to understand the inevitability of the social revolution, but totally unwilling to entrust this gigantic task to the immature proletariat alone. ... Their fundamental principle is fear of revolution." (*Letters to Sorge*, p. 390.)

And on November 11, 1893, he wrote: "... those haughty bourgeois who graciously condescend to emancipate the proletariat from above if only it would understand that such a raw, uneducated mass cannot liberate itself and cannot achieve anything without the grace of these clever lawyers, writers and sentimental old women." (*Ibid.*, p. 401.)

In theory Kautsky looks down upon the Fabians with the contempt of a pharisee for a poor sinner, for he swears by "Marxism." But what difference is there between

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\* *The Class Struggle Against the War, Materials on the Liebknecht Case*. Privately printed.—Ed.

the two in practice? Both signed the Basle Manifesto, and both treated it in the same way as Wilhelm II treated Belgian neutrality. But Marx all his life castigated those who strove to quench the revolutionary spirit of the workers.

In opposition to the revolutionary Marxists, Kautsky has advanced a new theory of "ultraimperialism." By this he means that the "mutual rivalries of national finance capitals" will be superseded by the "joint exploitation of the world by internationally united finance capital" (*Neue Zeit*, April 30, 1915). But he adds: "We have not yet sufficient data to decide whether this new phase of capitalism is possible." Thus, on the grounds of a mere assumption about a "new phase," not daring to declare definitely that it is "possible," the inventor of this "phase" rejects his own revolutionary declarations, rejects the revolutionary tasks and revolutionary tactics of the proletariat *now*, in the "phase" of an *already incipient* crisis, of war, of unprecedentedly sharp class antagonisms! Is this not Fabianism of the most abominable type?

Axelrod, the leader of the Russian Kautskyites, declared that: "the centre of gravity of the problem of internationalizing the proletarian movement for emancipation is the internationalization of everyday practice"; for example, "labour protection and insurance legislation must become the object of the workers' international actions and organization." (Axelrod, *The Crisis of Social-Democracy*, Zurich, 1915, pp. 39-40.) It is quite clear that not only Legien, David and the Webbs, but even Lloyd George himself, and Nauman, Briand and Milyukov would fully associate themselves with such "internationalism." As in 1912, Axelrod is prepared to utter the most revolutionary phrases for the very distant future, if the future International "comes out" (against the governments in case of war) "and raises a revolutionary storm." Oh, how brave we are! But when the question is raised of helping and developing the incipient revolutionary ferment among the masses *now*,

Axelrod replies that these tactics of revolutionary mass actions "would be justified to some extent if we were on the very eve of the social revolution, as was the case in Russia, for example, where the student demonstrations of 1901 heralded the approaching decisive battles against absolutism." At the present moment, however, all this is "utopia," "Bakunism," etc., quite in the spirit of Kolb, David, Südekum and Legien.

Dear Axelrod forgets, however, that nobody in Russia in 1901 knew, nor could know, that the first "decisive battle" would take place four years later—don't forget, *four* years, and would be "indecisive." Nevertheless, we revolutionary Marxists alone were right at that time: we ridiculed the Krichevskys and Martynovs, who called for an immediate assault. We merely advised the workers to kick out the opportunists everywhere and to exert every effort to sustain, sharpen and widen the demonstrations and other mass revolutionary actions. The present situation in Europe is perfectly analogous: it would be absurd to call for an "immediate" assault; but it would be disgraceful to call oneself a Social-Democrat and yet refrain from advising the workers to break with the opportunists and exert all efforts to strengthen, deepen, widen and sharpen the incipient revolutionary movement and demonstrations. Revolution never falls ready-made from the skies, and at the beginning of a revolutionary ferment nobody can tell whether and when it will lead to a "real," "genuine" revolution. Kautsky and Axelrod give the workers old, threadbare, counterrevolutionary advice. Kautsky and Axelrod feed the masses with the hope that the *future* International will certainly be revolutionary, only in order, *at present*, to protect, camouflage and embellish the domination of the counterrevolutionary elements—the Legiens, Davids, Vanderveldes and Hyndmans. Is it not obvious that "unity" with Legien and Co. is the best means for preparing the "future" revolutionary International?

"To strive to transform the World War into civil war would be folly," declares *David*, the leader of the German opportunists (*Die Sozialdemokratie und der Weltkrieg* [*Social-Democracy and the World War*], 1915, p. 172), in reply to the manifesto of the Central Committee of our Party, November 1, 1914. This manifesto says, *inter alia*:

"However difficult such a transformation may appear at any given moment, Socialists will never relinquish systematic, persistent and un-deviating preparatory work in this direction once war has become a fact."\* (This passage is also quoted by *David*, p. 171.)

A month before *David's* book appeared our Party published resolutions in which "systematic preparation" was defined as follows: 1) refusal to vote for credits; 2) breaking the class truce; 3) formation of underground organizations; 4) support of manifestations of solidarity in the trenches; 5) support of all revolutionary mass actions.\*\*

*David* is almost as brave as *Axelrod*. In 1912 he did not think it was "folly" to point to the Paris Commune as an example of what would happen in the event of war.

*Plekhanov*, that typical representative of the Entente social-chauvinists, argues about revolutionary tactics in the same way as *David*. He calls it a "farcical dream." But listen to what *Kolb*, a frank opportunist, has to say. *Kolb* wrote: "The tactics of those who group themselves around *Lieb knecht* would result in the struggle within the German nation reaching boiling point." (*Die Sozialdemokratie am Scheidewege* [*Social-Democracy at the Crossroads*], p. 50.)

But what is a struggle which has reached boiling point if not civil war?

If the tactics of our Central Committee, which, in the main, coincide with the tactics of the Zimmerwald Left,<sup>67</sup> were "folly," "dreams," "adventurism," "Bakunism," as *David*, *Plekhanov*, *Axelrod*, *Kautsky*, and others have as-

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\* See this volume, p. 405.—*Ed.*

\*\* *Lenin, Collected Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. XXI, p. 139-40.—*Ed.*

serted, they could never lead to a "struggle within a nation," let alone to the struggle reaching boiling point. Nowhere in the world have anarchist phrases brought about a struggle within a nation. But facts prove that precisely in 1915, as a result of the crisis created by the war, the revolutionary ferment among the masses is increasing; strikes and political demonstrations in Russia, strikes in Italy and in England, hunger demonstrations and political demonstrations in Germany, are growing. Are these not the beginnings of revolutionary mass struggles?

*To support, develop, widen, sharpen mass revolutionary actions; to create underground organizations—without which it is impossible even in "free" countries to tell the truth to the masses of the people—this is the sum and substance of the practical program of Social-Democracy in this war.* Everything else is either lies or phrases, no matter what opportunist or pacifist theories it is embellished with.\*

When we are told that these "Russian tactics" (David's expression) are not applicable to Europe, we usually reply by pointing to the facts. On October 30 a delegation of Berlin women comrades appeared before the Presidium of the Party in Berlin, and stated that "now that we have a large organizing apparatus it is much easier to distribute illegal pamphlets and leaflets and to organize 'prohibited meetings' than it was under the Anti-Socialist Law." "Ways and means are not lacking, evidently the will is lacking." (*Berner Tagwacht*, 1915, No. 271.)

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\* At the International Women's Congress held in Berne in March 1915, the representatives of the Central Committee of our Party urged the absolute necessity for creating underground organizations. This was rejected. The English delegates laughed at this proposal and praised English "liberty." But a few months later English papers, like the *Labour Leader*, reached us with blank spaces, and then news arrived about police raids, confiscation of pamphlets, arrests, and harsh sentences imposed on comrades who spoke in England about peace, only about peace!

Were these bad comrades diverted from the path of truth by the Russian "sectarians," etc.? Are the real *masses* represented, not by these comrades, but by Legien and Kautsky? By Legien, who in the lecture he delivered on January 27, 1915, thundered against the "anarchistic" idea of forming underground organizations; and by Kautsky, who has become so counterrevolutionary that on November 26, *four* days before the demonstration of ten thousand in Berlin, he denounced street demonstrations as "adventurism"!!

Enough of phrases! Enough of prostituted "Marxism" à la Kautsky! After twenty-five years of the Second International, after the Basle Manifesto, the workers will no longer trust in phrases. Opportunism has become overripe; it has turned into social-chauvinism and has definitely deserted to the camp of the bourgeoisie: it has spiritually and politically severed its ties with Social-Democracy. It will also break with it organizationally. The workers are already demanding an "uncensored" press and "prohibited" meetings, i.e., secret organizations to support the revolutionary mass movement. Only such a "war against war" is Social-Democratic work, and not a phrase. And in spite of all difficulties, temporary defeats, mistakes, straying, interruptions, this work will lead mankind to the victorious proletarian revolution.

Published in German in  
*Vorbote (The Herald)*, No. 1,  
January 1916

V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*,  
Fourth Russian Edition,  
Vol. XXII, pp. 96-108



# **IMPERIALISM, THE HIGHEST STAGE OF CAPITALISM**

**A POPULAR OUTLINE**

## **PREFACE**

The pamphlet here presented to the reader was written in the spring of 1916, in Zurich. In the conditions in which I was obliged to work there I naturally suffered somewhat from a shortage of French and English literature and from a serious dearth of Russian literature. However, I made use of the principal English work on imperialism, the book by J. A. Hobson, with all the care that, in my opinion, that work deserves.

This pamphlet was written with an eye to the tsarist censorship. Hence, I was not only forced to confine myself strictly to an exclusively theoretical, particularly economic analysis of facts, but to formulate the few necessary observations on politics with extreme caution, by hints, in an allegorical language—in that accursed Aesopian language—to which tsarism compelled all revolutionaries to have recourse whenever they took up their pens to write a “legal” work.

It is painful, in these days of liberty, to reread these passages of the pamphlet, which have been distorted, cramped, compressed in an iron vise on account of the censor. About the fact that imperialism is the eve of the socialist revolution; that social-chauvinism (Socialism in words,

chauvinism in deeds) is the utter betrayal of Socialism, complete desertion to the side of the bourgeoisie; that this split in the working-class movement is bound up with the objective conditions of imperialism, etc., I had to speak in a "slavish" tongue, and I must refer the reader who is interested in the subject to the articles I wrote abroad in 1914-17, a new edition of which is soon to appear. Special attention should be drawn to a passage on pages 119-20.\* In order to show the reader, in a guise acceptable to the censors, how shamelessly the capitalists and the social-chauvinists who have deserted to their side (and whom Kautsky opposes with so much inconsistency) lie on the question of annexations; in order to show how shamelessly they *screen* the annexations of *their* capitalists, I was forced to quote as an example—Japan! The careful reader will easily substitute Russia for Japan, and Finland, Poland, Courland, the Ukraine, Khiva, Bokhara, Estonia or other regions peopled by non-Great Russians, for Korea.

I trust that this pamphlet will help the reader to understand the fundamental economic question, viz., the question of the economic essence of imperialism, for unless this is studied, it will be impossible to understand and appraise modern war and modern politics.

AUTHOR

Petrograd,  
April 26, 1917

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\* See this volume, pp. 560-62.—Ed.

## PREFACE TO THE FRENCH AND GERMAN EDITIONS

### I

As was indicated in the preface to the Russian edition, this pamphlet was written in 1916, with an eye to the tsarist censorship. I am unable to revise the whole text at the present time, nor, perhaps, would this be advisable, since the main purpose of the book was and remains: to present, on the basis of the summarized returns of irrefutable bourgeois statistics, and the admissions of bourgeois scholars of all countries, a *composite picture* of the world capitalist system in its international relationships at the beginning of the twentieth century—on the eve of the first world imperialist war.

To a certain extent it will even be useful for many Communists in advanced capitalist countries to convince themselves by the example of this pamphlet, *legal from the standpoint of the tsarist censor*, of the possibility—and necessity—of making use of even the slight remnants of legality which still remain at the disposal of the Communists, say, in contemporary America or France, after the recent almost wholesale arrests of Communists, in order to explain the utter falsity of social-pacifist views and hopes for “world democracy.” The most essential of what should be added to this censored pamphlet I shall try to present in this preface.

## II

It is proved in the pamphlet that the war of 1914-18 was imperialistic (that is, an annexationist, predatory, plunderous war) on the part of both sides; it was a war for the division of the world, for the partition and repartition of colonies, "spheres of influence" of finance capital, etc.

Proof of what was the true social, or rather, the true class character of the war is naturally to be found, not in the diplomatic history of the war, but in an analysis of the *objective* position of the ruling *classes* in *all* the belligerent countries. In order to depict this objective position one must not take examples or isolated data (in view of the extreme complexity of the phenomena of social life it is always possible to select any number of examples or separate data to prove any proposition), but the *whole* of the data concerning the *basis* of economic life in *all* the belligerent countries and the *whole* world.

It is precisely irrefutable summarized data of this kind that I quoted in describing the *partition of the world* in 1876 and 1914 (in Chapter VI) and the distribution of the *railways* all over the world in 1890 and 1913 (in Chapter VII). Railways are a summation of the basic capitalist industries: coal, iron and steel; a summation and the most striking indices of the development of world trade and bourgeois-democratic civilization. How the railways are linked up with large-scale industry, with monopolies, syndicates, cartels, trusts, banks and the financial oligarchy is shown in the preceding chapters of the book. The uneven distribution of the railways, their uneven development—sums up, as it were, modern monopolist capitalism on a world-wide scale. And this summary proves that imperialist wars are absolutely inevitable under *such* an economic system, *as long as* private property in the means of production exists.

The building of railways seems to be a simple, natural,

democratic, cultural and civilizing enterprise; that is what it is in the opinion of bourgeois professors, who are paid to depict capitalist slavery in bright colours, and in the opinion of petty-bourgeois philistines. But as a matter of fact the capitalist threads, which in thousands of different intercrossings bind these enterprises with private property in means of production in general, have converted this railway construction into an instrument for oppressing *a thousand million* people (in the colonies and semicolonies), that is, more than half the population of the globe inhabiting the dependent countries, as well as the wage slaves of capital in the "civilized" countries.

Private property based on the labour of the small proprietor, free competition, democracy, all the catchwords with which the capitalists and their press deceive the workers and the peasants—are things of the distant past. Capitalism has grown into a world system of colonial oppression and of the financial strangulation of the overwhelming majority of the population of the world by a handful of "advanced" countries. And this "booty" is shared between two or three powerful world marauders armed to the teeth (America, Great Britain, Japan), who involve the whole world in *their* war over the sharing of *their* booty.

### III

The Brest-Litovsk Peace Treaty dictated by monarchist Germany, and the subsequent much more brutal and despicable Versailles Treaty dictated by the "democratic" republics of America and France and also by "free" England, have rendered a most useful service to humanity by exposing both the hired coolies of the pen of imperialism and the petty-bourgeois reactionaries, although they call themselves pacifists and Socialists, who sang praises to "Wilsonism," and who insisted that peace and reforms were possible under imperialism.

The tens of millions of dead and maimed left by the war—a war to decide whether the British or German group of financial marauders is to receive the most booty—and those two “peace treaties,” are with unprecedented rapidity opening the eyes of the millions and tens of millions of people who are downtrodden, oppressed, deceived and duped by the bourgeoisie. Thus, out of the universal ruin caused by the war a world-wide revolutionary crisis is arising which, however prolonged and arduous its stages may be, cannot end otherwise than in a proletarian revolution and in its victory.

The Basle Manifesto of the Second International, which in 1912 gave an appraisal of the very war that broke out in 1914 and not of war in general (there are different kinds of wars, including revolutionary wars), this Manifesto is now a monument exposing the utter shameful bankruptcy and treachery of the heroes of the Second International.

That is why I reproduce this Manifesto as a supplement to the present edition,<sup>68</sup> and again and again I urge the reader to note that the heroes of the Second International are as assiduously avoiding the passages of this Manifesto which speak precisely, clearly and definitely of the connection between that impending war and the proletarian revolution, as a thief avoids the place where he has committed a theft.

#### IV

Special attention has been devoted in this pamphlet to a criticism of “Kautskyism,” the international ideological trend represented in all countries of the world by the “most prominent theoreticians” and leaders of the Second International (Otto Bauer and Co. in Austria, Ramsay MacDonald and others in England, Albert Thomas in France, etc., etc.) and a multitude of Socialists, reformists, pacifists, bourgeois-democrats and parsons.

This ideological trend is, on the one hand, a product of the disintegration and decay of the Second International, and, on the other hand, the inevitable fruit of the ideology of the petty bourgeoisie, who, by the whole of their conditions of life, are held captive to bourgeois and democratic prejudices.

The views held by Kautsky and his like are a complete renunciation of the very revolutionary principles of Marxism which that writer has championed for decades, especially, by the way, in his struggle against socialist opportunism (of Bernstein, Millerand, Hyndman, Gompers, etc.). It is not a mere accident, therefore, that the "Kautskyans" all over the world have now united in practical politics with the extreme opportunists (through the Second, or the Yellow International) and with the bourgeois governments (through bourgeois coalition governments in which Socialists take part).

The growing world proletarian revolutionary movement in general, and the Communist movement in particular, cannot dispense with an analysis and exposure of the theoretical errors of "Kautskyism." The more so since pacifism and "democracy" in general, which lay no claim to Marxism whatever, but which, like Kautsky and Co., are obscuring the profundity of the contradictions of imperialism and the inevitable revolutionary crisis to which it gives rise, are still very widespread all over the world. To combat these tendencies is the bounden duty of the Party of the proletariat, which must win away from the bourgeoisie the small proprietors who are duped by them, and the millions of toilers who have been placed under more or less petty-bourgeois conditions of life.

## V

A few words must be said about Chapter VIII entitled: "The Parasitism and Decay of Capitalism." As already pointed out in the text, Hilferding, ex-"Marxist," and now a

comrade-in-arms of Kautsky and one of the chief exponents of bourgeois, reformist policy in the Independent Social-Democratic Party of Germany, has taken a step backward on this question compared with the *frankly* pacifist and reformist Englishman, Hobson. The international split of the whole working-class movement is now quite evident (the Second and the Third Internationals). The fact that armed struggle and civil war is now raging between the two trends is also evident: the support given to Kolchak and Denikin in Russia by the Mensheviks and "Socialist-Revolutionaries" against the Bolsheviks; the fight the Scheidemanns, Noskes and Co. have conducted in conjunction with the bourgeoisie against the Spartacists in Germany; the same thing in Finland, Poland, Hungary, etc. What is the economic basis of this world-historic phenomenon?

Precisely the parasitism and decay of capitalism which are characteristic of its highest historical stage of development, i.e., imperialism. As is proved in this pamphlet, capitalism has now singled out a *handful* (less than one-tenth of the inhabitants of the globe; less than one-fifth at a most "generous" and liberal calculation) of exceptionally rich and powerful states which plunder the whole world simply by "clipping coupons." Capital exports yield an income of eight to ten billion francs per annum, at prewar prices and according to prewar bourgeois statistics. Now, of course, they yield much more.

Obviously, out of such enormous *superprofits* (since they are obtained over and above the profits which capitalists squeeze out of the workers of their "own" country) it is *possible to bribe* the labour leaders and the upper stratum of the labour aristocracy. And the capitalists of the "advanced" countries are bribing them; they bribe them in a thousand different ways, direct and indirect, overt and covert.

This stratum of bourgeoisified workers, or the "labour aristocracy," who are quite philistine in their mode of life,



in the size of their earnings and in their entire outlook, is the principal prop of the Second International, and, in our days, the principal *social* (not military) *prop of the bourgeoisie*. For they are the real *agents of the bourgeoisie in the working-class* movement, the labour lieutenants of the capitalist class, real channels of reformism and chauvinism. In the civil war between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie they inevitably, and in no small numbers, take the side of the bourgeoisie, the "Versaillaise" against the "Communards."

Unless the economic roots of this phenomenon are understood and its political and social significance is appreciated, not a step can be taken toward the solution of the practical problems of the Communist movement and of the impending social revolution.

Imperialism is the eve of the social revolution of the proletariat. This has been confirmed since 1917 on a world-wide scale.

N. LENIN

July 6, 1920

During the last fifteen to twenty years, especially since the Spanish-American War (1898), and the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902), the economic and also the political literature of the two hemispheres has more and more often adopted the term "imperialism" in order to describe the present era. In 1902, a book by the English economist J. A. Hobson, *Imperialism*, was published in London and New York. This author, whose point of view is that of bourgeois social reformism and pacifism which, in essence, is identical with the present point of view of the ex-Marxist, K. Kautsky, gives a very good and comprehensive description of the principal specific economic and political features of imperialism. In 1910, there appeared in Vienna the work of the Austrian Marxist, Rudolf Hilferding, *Finance Capital* (Russian edition: Moscow, 1912). In spite of the mistake the author commits on the theory of money, and in spite of a certain inclination on his part to reconcile Marxism with opportunism, this work gives a very valuable theoretical analysis of "the latest phase of capitalist development," the subtitle of the book. Indeed, what has been said of imperialism during the last few years, especially in an enormous number of magazine and newspaper articles, and also in the resolutions, for example, of the Chemnitz and Basle congresses which took place in the autumn of 1912, has scarcely gone beyond the ideas expounded, or, more exactly, summed up by the two writers mentioned above. . . .

Later on, we shall try to show briefly, and as simply as possible, the connection and relationships between the *principal economic features* of imperialism. We shall not

be able to deal with non-economic aspects of the question, however much they deserve to be dealt with. We have put references to literature and other notes which, perhaps, would not interest all readers, at the end of this pamphlet.<sup>69</sup>

## I. CONCENTRATION OF PRODUCTION AND MONOPOLIES

(The enormous growth of industry and the remarkably rapid process of concentration of production in ever-larger enterprises are one of the most characteristic features of capitalism.) Modern censuses of production give most complete and most exact data on this process.

In Germany, for example, out of every 1,000 industrial enterprises, large enterprises, i.e., those employing more than 50 workers, numbered three in 1882, six in 1895 and nine in 1907; and out of every 100 workers employed, this group of enterprises employed 22, 30 and 37, respectively. Concentration of production, however, is much more intense than the concentration of workers, since labour in the large enterprises is much more productive. This is shown by the figures on steam engines and electric motors. (If we take what in Germany is called industry in the broad sense of the term, that is, including commerce, transport, etc., we get the following picture. Large-scale enterprises 30,588 out of a total of 3,265,623, that is to say, 0.9 per cent. These enterprises employ 5,700,000 workers out of a total of 14,400,000, i.e., 39.4 per cent; they use 6,600,000 steam horsepower out of a total of 8,800,000, i.e., 75.3 per cent, and 1,200,000 kilowatts of electricity out of a total of 1,500,000, i.e., 77.2 per cent.)

(Less than one-hundredth of the total enterprises utilize more than three-fourths of the total steam and electric power! Two million nine hundred and seventy thousand small enterprises (employing up to five workers), constitut-

ing 91 per cent of the total, utilize only 7 per cent of the total steam and electric power! Tens of thousands of huge enterprises are everything; millions of small ones are nothing.)

In 1907, there were in Germany 586 establishments employing one thousand and more workers, nearly *one-tenth* (1,380,000) of the total number of workers employed in industry, and they utilized *almost one-third* (32 per cent) of the total steam and electric power.\* As we shall see, money capital and the banks make this superiority of a handful of the largest enterprises still more overwhelming, in the most literal sense of the word, i.e., millions of small, medium and even some big "masters" are in fact in complete subjection to some hundreds of millionaire financiers.

In another advanced country of modern capitalism, the United States of America, the growth of the concentration of production is still greater. Here statistics single out industry in the narrow sense of the word and group enterprises according to the value of their annual output. In 1904 large-scale enterprises with an output of one million dollars and over numbered 1,900 (out of 216,180, i.e., 0.9 per cent). These employed 1,400,000 workers (out of 5,500,000, i.e., 25.6 per cent) and their output amounted to \$5,600,000,000 (out of \$14,800,000,000, i.e., 38 per cent). Five years later, in 1909, the corresponding figures were: 3,060 enterprises (out of 268,491, i.e., 1.1 per cent) employing 2,000,000 workers (out of 6,600,000, i.e., 30.5 per cent) with an output of \$9,000,000,000 (out of \$20,700,000,000, i.e., 43.8 per cent).\*\*

(Almost half the total production of all the enterprises of the country was carried on by *one-hundredth part* of these enterprises! These 3,000 giant enterprises embrace 258 branches of industry. From this it can be seen that, at

\* Figures taken from *Annalen des Deutsches Reichs*, 1911, Zahn.

\*\* *Statistical Abstract of the United States*, 1912, p. 202.

a certain stage of its development, concentration itself, as it were, leads right up to monopoly; for a score or so of giant enterprises can easily arrive at an agreement, while on the other hand, the hindrance to competition, the tendency towards monopoly, arises from the very dimensions of the enterprises. This transformation of competition into monopoly is one of the most important—if not the most important—phenomena of modern capitalist economy, and we must deal with it in greater detail. But first we must clear up one possible misunderstanding.

American statistics say: 3,000 giant enterprises in 250 branches of industry, as if there were only a dozen enterprises of the largest scale for each branch of industry.

(But this is not the case. Not in every branch of industry are there large-scale enterprises; and moreover, a very important feature of capitalism in its highest stage of development is so-called *combination* of production, that is to say, the grouping in a single enterprise of different branches of industry, which either represent the consecutive stages in the processing of raw materials (for example, the smelting of iron ore into pig iron, the conversion of pig iron into steel, and then, perhaps, the manufacture of steel goods)—or are auxiliary to one another (for example, the utilization of scrap, or of by-products, the manufacture of packing materials, etc.).

“Combination,” writes Hilferding, “levels out the fluctuations of trade and therefore assures to the combined enterprises a more stable rate of profit. Secondly, combination has the effect of eliminating trade. Thirdly, it has the effect of rendering possible technical improvements, and, consequently, the acquisition of superprofits over and above those obtained by the ‘pure’ (i.e., non-combined) enterprises. Fourthly, it strengthens the position of the combined enterprises compared with that of ‘pure’ enterprises, strengthens them in the competitive struggle in periods of serious

depression, when the fall in prices of raw materials does not keep pace with the fall in prices of manufactured goods.”\*

(The German bourgeois economist, Heymann, who has written a book especially on “mixed,” that is, combined, enterprises in the German iron industry, says: “Pure enterprises perish, they are crushed between the high price of raw material and the low price of the finished product.” Thus we get the following picture: “There remain, on the one hand, the big coal companies, producing millions of tons yearly, strongly organized in their coal syndicate, and on the other, the big steel plants, closely allied to the coal mines, having their own steel syndicate. These giant enterprises, producing 400,000 tons of steel per annum, with a tremendous output of ore and coal and producing finished steel goods, employing 10,000 workers quartered in company houses, and sometimes owning their own railways and ports, are the typical representatives of the German iron and steel industry. And concentration goes on further and further. Individual enterprises are becoming larger and larger. An ever-increasing number of enterprises in one, or in several different industries, join together in giant enterprises, backed up and directed by half a dozen big Berlin banks. In relation to the German mining industry, the truth of the teachings of Karl Marx on concentration is definitely proved; true, this applies to a country where industry is protected by tariffs and freight rates. The German mining industry is ripe for expropriation.”\*\*)

Such is the conclusion which a conscientious bourgeois economist, and such are the exception, had to arrive at: It must be noted that he seems to place Germany in a special category because her industries are protected by high tariffs. But this circumstance could only accelerate con-

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\* *Finance Capital*, Russ. ed., pp. 286-87.

\*\* Hans Gideon Heymann, *Die gemischten Werke im deutschen Grosseisengewerbe* (Combined Plants in the German Big Iron Industry—Tr.), Stuttgart 1904 (SS. 256, 278).

centration and the formation of monopolist manufacturers' combines, cartels, syndicates, etc. It is extremely important to note that in free-trade England, concentration *also* leads to monopoly, although somewhat later and perhaps in another form. Professor Hermann Levy, in his special work of research entitled *Monopolies, Cartels and Trusts*, based on data on British economic development, writes as follows:

"In Great Britain it is the size of the enterprise and its high technical level which harbour a monopolist tendency. This, for one thing, is due to the great investment of capital per enterprise, which gives rise to increasing demands for new capital for the new enterprises and thereby renders their launching more difficult. Moreover (and this seems to us to be the more important point) every new enterprise that wants to keep pace with the gigantic enterprises that have been formed by concentration would here produce such an enormous quantity of surplus goods that it could dispose of them only by being able to sell them profitably as a result of an enormous increase in demand; otherwise, this surplus would force prices down to a level that would be unprofitable both for the new enterprise and for the monopoly combines." In England—unlike other countries where protective tariffs facilitate the formation of cartels—monopolist alliances of entrepreneurs, cartels and trusts arise in the majority of cases only when the number of the chief competing enterprises is reduced to "a couple of dozen or so." "Here the influence of the concentration movement on the formation of large industrial monopolies in a whole sphere of industry stands out with crystal clarity."\*

Half a century ago, when Marx was writing *Capital*, free competition appeared to the overwhelming majority of economists to be a "natural law." Official science tried,

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\* Hermann Levy, *Monopole, Kartelle und Trusts*, Jena, 1909, SS. 286, 290, 298.

by a conspiracy of silence, to kill the works of Marx, (who by a theoretical and historical analysis of capitalism proved that free competition gives rise to the concentration of production, which, in turn, at a certain stage of development, leads to monopoly. Today, monopoly has become a fact. The economists are writing mountains of books in which they describe the diverse manifestations of monopoly, and continue to declare in chorus that "Marxism is refuted." But facts are stubborn things, as the English proverb says, and they have to be reckoned with, whether we like it or not. The facts show that differences between capitalist countries, e.g., in the matter of protection or free trade, only give rise to insignificant variations in the form of monopolies or in the moment of their appearance; and that the rise of monopolies, as the result of the concentration of production, is a general and fundamental law of the present stage of development of capitalism.)

For Europe, the time when the new capitalism *definitely* superseded the old can be established with fair precision: it was the beginning of the twentieth century. In one of the latest compilations on the history of the "formation of monopolies," we read:

"Isolated examples of capitalist monopoly could be cited from the period preceding 1860; in these could be discerned the embryo of the forms that are so common today; but all this undoubtedly represents the prehistory of the cartels. The real beginning of modern monopoly goes back, at the earliest, to the 'sixties. The first important period of development of monopoly commenced with the international industrial depression of the 'seventies and lasted until the beginning of the 'nineties." "If we examine the question on a European scale, we will find that the development of free competition reached its apex in the 'sixties and 'seventies. Then it was that England completed the construction of its old-style capitalist organization. In Germany, this organization had entered into a fierce strug-



gle with handicraft and domestic industry, and had begun to create for itself its own forms of existence."

"The great revolution commenced with the crash of 1873, or rather, the depression which followed it and which, with hardly discernible interruptions in the early 'eighties, and the unusually violent, but short-lived boom about 1889, marks twenty-two years of European economic history." "During the short boom of 1889-90, the system of cartels was widely resorted to in order to take advantage of the favourable business conditions. An ill-considered policy drove prices up still more rapidly and still higher than would have been the case if there were no cartels, and nearly all these cartels perished ingloriously in the smash. Another five-year period of bad trade and low prices followed, but a new spirit reigned in industry; the depression was no longer regarded as something to be taken for granted; it was regarded as nothing more than a pause before another boom.

"The cartel movement entered its second epoch: instead of being a transitory phenomenon, the cartels became one of the foundations of economic life. They are winning one field of industry after another, primarily, the raw materials industry. At the beginning of the 'nineties the cartel system had already acquired—in the organization of the coke syndicate on the model of which the coal syndicate was later formed—a cartel technique which could hardly be improved. For the first time the great boom at the close of the nineteenth century and the crisis of 1900-03 occurred entirely—in the mining and iron industries at least—under the aegis of the cartels. And while at that time it appeared to be something novel, now the general public takes it for granted that large spheres of economic life have been, as a general rule, removed from the realm of free competition."\*

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\* Th. Vogelstein, *Die finanzielle Organisation der kapitalistischen Industrie und die Monopolbildungen* (*Financial Organization of the*

Thus, the principal stages in the history of monopolies are the following: 1) 1860-70, the highest stage, the apex of development of free competition; monopoly is in the barely discernible, embryonic stage. 2) After the crisis of 1873, a lengthy period of development of cartels; but they are still the exception. They are not yet durable. They are still a transitory phenomenon. 3) The boom at the end of the nineteenth century and the crisis of 1900-03. Cartels become one of the foundations of the whole of economic life. Capitalism has been transformed into imperialism.)

(Cartels come to an agreement on the conditions of sale, terms of payment, etc. They divide the markets among themselves. They fix the quantity of goods to be produced. They fix prices. They divide the profits among the various enterprises, etc.)

The number of cartels in Germany was estimated at about 250 in 1896 and at 385 in 1905, with about 12,000 firms participating.\* But it is generally recognized that these figures are underestimations. From the statistics of German industry for 1907 we quoted above, it is evident that even these 12,000 very big enterprises concentrate certainly more than half the steam and electric power used in the country. In the United States of America, the number of trusts in 1900 was 185 and in 1907, 250. Amer-

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*Capitalist Industry and the Formation of Monopolies—Tr.) in Grundriss der Sozialökonomik (Outline of Social Economics—Tr.), VI Abt., Tübingen 1914. Cf., also by the same author: Organisationsformen der Eisenindustrie und Textilindustrie in England und Amerika (The Organizational Forms of the Iron and Textile Industry of England and America—Tr.), Bd. I, Lpz. 1910.*

\* Dr. Riesser, *Die deutschen Grossbanken und ihre Konzentration im Zusammenhange mit der Entwicklung der Gesamtwirtschaft in Deutschland (The German Big Banks and Their Concentration in Connection with the Development of the General Economy in Germany—Tr.), 4. Aufl., 1912. S. 149; Robert Liefmann, Kartelle und Trusts und die Weiterbildung der volkswirtschaftlichen Organisation (Cartels and Trusts and the Further Development of Economic Organization—Tr.), 2. Aufl., 1910, S. 25.*

ican statistics divide all industrial enterprises into those belonging to individuals, to private firms or to corporations. The latter in 1904 comprised 23.6 per cent, and in 1909, 25.9 per cent, i.e., more than one-fourth of the total industrial enterprises in the country. These employed in 1904, 70.6 per cent, and in 1909, 75.6 per cent, i.e., more than three-fourths of the total wage earners. Their output amounted at these two dates to \$10,900,000,000 and to \$16,300,000,000, i.e., to 73.7 per cent and 79.0 per cent of the total, respectively.

Not infrequently cartels and trusts concentrate in their hands seven- or eight-tenths of the total output of a given branch of industry. The Rhine-Westphalian Coal Syndicate, at its foundation in 1893, concentrated 86.7 per cent of the total coal output of the area, and in 1910 it already concentrated 95.4 per cent.\* The monopoly so created assures enormous profits, and leads to the formation of technical productive units of formidable magnitude. The famous Standard Oil Company in the United States was founded in 1900: "It has an authorized capital of \$150,000,000. It issued \$100,000,000 common and \$106,000,000 preferred stock. From 1900 to 1907 the following dividends were paid on the latter: 48, 48, 45, 44, 36, 40, 40, 40 per cent in the respective years, i.e., in all, \$367,000,000. From 1882 to 1907, out of total net profits amounting to \$889,000,000, \$606,000,000 were distributed in dividends, and the rest went to reserve capital.\*\* "In 1907 the various works of the United States Steel Corporation employed no less than 210,180 workers and other employees. The largest

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\* Dr. Fritz Kestner, *Der Organisationszwang. Eine Untersuchung über die Kämpfe zwischen Kartellen und Aussenseitern (Compulsory Organization. An Investigation of the Struggle between Cartels and Outsiders—Tr.)*, Berlin 1912, p. 11.

\*\* R. Liefmann, *Beteiligungs- und Finanzierungsgesellschaften. Eine Studie über den modernen Kapitalismus und das Effektenwesen (Holding and Finance Companies—A Study in Modern Capitalism and Securities—Tr.)*, 1. Aufl., Jena 1909, p. 212.

enterprise in the German mining industry, the Gelsenkirchen Mining Company (*Gelsenkirchener Bergwerksgesellschaft*) in 1908 had a staff of 46,048 workers and office employees.”\* In 1902, the United States Steel Corporation already produced 9,000,000 tons of steel.\*\* Its output constituted in 1901, 66.3 per cent, and in 1908, 56.1 per cent of the total output of steel in the United States.\*\*\* The output of ore was 43.9 per cent and 46.3 per cent, respectively.

The report of the American Government Commission on Trusts states: “Their superiority over competitors is due to the magnitude of its enterprises and their excellent technical equipment. Since its inception, the Tobacco Trust has devoted all its efforts to the substitution of mechanical for manual labour on an extensive scale. With this end in view it bought up all patents that had anything to do with the manufacture of tobacco and spent enormous sums for this purpose. Many of these patents at first proved to be of no use, and had to be modified by the engineers employed by the trust. At the end of 1906, two subsidiary companies were formed solely to acquire patents. With the same object in view, the trust built its own foundaries, machine shops and repair shops. One of these establishments, that in Brooklyn, employs on the average 300 workers; here experiments are carried out on inventions concerning the manufacture of cigarettes, cheroots, snuff, tinfoil for packing, boxes, etc. Here, also, inventions are perfected.\*\*\*\* “Other trusts also employ so-called developing engineers whose business it is to devise new methods of production

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\* *Ibid.*, p. 218.

\*\* Dr. S. Tschierschky, *Kartell und Trust*, Göttingen 1903, p. 13.

\*\*\* Th. Vogelstein, *Organisationsformen*, p. 275.

\*\*\*\* *Report of the Commissioner of Corporations on the Tobacco Industry*, Washington 1909, p. 266, cited according to Dr. Paul Tafel, *Die nordamerikanischen Trusts und ihre Wirkungen auf den Fortschritt der Technik (North American Trusts and Their Effect on Technical Progress—Tr.)*, Stuttgart 1913, p. 48.

and to test technical improvements. The United States Steel Corporation grants big bonuses to its workers and engineers for all inventions suitable for raising technical efficiency, or for reducing cost of production.”\*

In German large-scale industry, e.g., in the chemical industry, which has developed so enormously during these last few decades, the promotion of technical improvement is organized in the same way. By 1908 the process of concentration of production had already given rise to two main “groups” which, in their way, were also in the nature of monopolies. First these groups constituted “dual alliances” of two pairs of big factories, each having a capital of from twenty to twenty-one million marks: on the one hand, the former Meister Factory at Höchst and the Cassella Factory at Frankfurt am Main; and on the other hand, the aniline and soda factory at Ludwigshafen and the former Bayer factory at Elberfeld. Then, in 1905, one of these groups, and in 1908 the other group, each concluded an agreement with yet another big factory. The result was the formation of two “triple alliances,” each with a capital of from forty to fifty million marks. And these “alliances” have already begun to come “close” to one another, to reach “an understanding” about prices, etc.\*\*

(Competition becomes transformed into monopoly. The result is immense progress in the socialization of production. In particular, the process of technical invention and improvement becomes socialized.)

(This is something quite different from the old free competition between manufacturers, scattered and out of touch with one another, and producing for an unknown market. Concentration has reached the point at which it is possible to make an approximate estimate of all sources of raw

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\* Dr. P. Tafel, *ibid.*, p. 49.

\*\* Riesser, *op. cit.*, third edition, p. 547 et seq. The newspapers (June 1916) report the formation of a new gigantic trust which combines the chemical industry of Germany.

materials (for example, the iron ore deposits) of a country and even, as we shall see, of several countries, or of the whole world. Not only are such estimates made, but these sources are captured by gigantic monopolist combines: An approximate estimate of the capacity of markets is also made, and the combines "divide" them up amongst themselves by agreement. Skilled labour is monopolized, the best engineers are engaged; the means of transport are captured: railways in America, shipping companies in Europe and America. Capitalism in its imperialist stage leads right up to the most comprehensive socialization of production; it, so to speak, drags the capitalists, against their will and consciousness, into some sort of a new social order, a transitional one from complete free competition to complete socialization.)

Production becomes social, but appropriation remains private. The social means of production remain the private property of a few. The general framework of formally recognized free competition remains, but the yoke of a few monopolists on the rest of the population becomes a hundred times heavier, more burdensome and intolerable.

The German economist, Kestner, has written a book especially devoted to "the struggle between the cartels and outsiders," i.e., the capitalists outside the cartels. He entitled his work *Compulsory Organization*, although, in order to present capitalism in its true light, he should, of course, have written about compulsory submission to monopolist combines. It is instructive to glance at least at the list of the methods the monopolist combines resort to in the present day, the latest, the civilized struggle for "organization": 1) stopping supplies of raw materials (... "one of the most important methods of compelling adherence to the cartel"); 2) stopping the supply of labour by means of "alliances" (i.e., of agreements between the capitalists and the trade unions by which the latter permit their members to work only in cartelized enterprises); 3) stopping deliveries;

4) closing of trade outlets; 5) agreements with the buyers, by which the latter undertake to trade only with the cartels; 6) systematic price cutting (to ruin "outside" firms, i.e., those which refuse to submit to the monopolists. Millions are spent in order to sell goods for a certain time below their cost price; there were instances when the price of benzine was thus reduced from 40 to 22 marks, i.e., almost by half!); 7) stopping credits; 8) boycott.

{Here we no longer have competition between small and large, technically developed and backward enterprises. We see here the monopolists throttling those which do not submit to them, to their yoke, to their dictation. This is how this process is reflected in the mind of a bourgeois economist:

"Even in the purely economic sphere," writes Kestner, "a certain change is taking place from commercial activity in the old sense of the word towards organizational-speculative activity. The greatest success no longer goes to the merchant whose technical and commercial experience enables him best of all to estimate the needs of the buyer, and who is able to discover and, so to speak, 'awaken' a latent demand; it goes to the speculative genius" (?) "who knows how to estimate, or even only to sense in advance the organizational development and the possibilities of certain connections between individual enterprises and the banks. . ."

Translated into ordinary human language this means that the development of capitalism has arrived at a stage when, although commodity production still "reigns" and continues to be regarded as the basis of economic life, it has in reality been undermined and the bulk of the profits go to the "geniuses" of financial manipulation. At the basis of these manipulations and swindles lies socialized production; but the immense progress of mankind which achieved this socialization, goes to benefit . . . the speculators. We shall see later how "on these grounds" reaction-

ary, petty-bourgeois critics of capitalist imperialism dream of going *back* to "free," "peaceful," and "honest" competition.

"The prolonged raising of prices which results from the formation of cartels," says Kestner, "has hitherto been observed only in relation to the most important means of production, particularly coal, iron and potassium, but has never been observed in relation to manufactured goods. Similarly, the increase in profits resulting from this raising of prices has been limited only to the industries which produce means of production. To this observation we must add that the industries which process raw materials (and not semimanufactures) not only secure advantages from the cartel formation in the shape of high profits, to the detriment of the finished goods industry, but secured also a *dominating position* over the latter, which did not exist under free competition."\*

(The words which we have italicized reveal the essence of the case which the bourgeois economists admit so reluctantly and so rarely, and which the present-day defenders of opportunism, led by K. Kautsky, so zealously try to evade and brush aside. Domination, and violence that is associated with it, such are the relationships that are typical of the "latest phase of capitalist development"; this is what inevitably had to result, and has resulted, from the formation of all-powerful economic monopolies.)

We will give one more example of the methods employed by the cartels. Where it is possible to capture all or the chief sources of raw materials, the rise of cartels and formation of monopolies is exceptionally easy. It would be wrong, however, to assume that monopolies do not arise in other industries in which it is impossible to corner the sources of raw materials. The cement industry, for instance, can find its raw materials everywhere. Yet in Germany this

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\* Kestner, *op. cit.*, p. 254.



industry too is strongly cartelized. The cement manufacturers have formed regional syndicates: South German, Rhine-Westphalian, etc. The prices fixed are monopoly prices: 230, to 280 marks a carload, when the cost price is 180 marks! The enterprises pay a dividend of from 12 per cent to 16 per cent—and it must not be forgotten that the “geniuses” of modern speculation know how to pocket big profits besides what they draw in dividends. In order to prevent competition in such a profitable industry, the monopolists even resort to sundry stratagems: they spread false rumours about the bad situation in their industry; anonymous warnings are published in the newspapers, like the following: “Capitalists, don’t invest your capital in the cement industry!”; lastly, they buy up “outsiders” (those outside the syndicates) and pay them “compensation” of 60,000, 80,000 and even 150,000 marks.\* Monopoly hews a path for itself everywhere without scruple as to the means, from paying a “modest” sum to buy off competitors to the American device of “employing” dynamite against them.

The statement that cartels can abolish crises is a fable spread by bourgeois economists who at all costs desire to place capitalism in a favourable light. On the contrary, monopoly which is created in *certain* branches of industry, increases and intensifies the anarchy inherent in capitalist production *as a whole*. The disparity between the development of agriculture and that of industry, which is characteristic of capitalism in general, is increased. The privileged position of the most highly cartelized, so-called *heavy* industry, especially coal and iron, causes “a still greater lack of coordination” in other branches of industry—as Jeidels, the author of one of the best works on “the relationship of the German big banks to industry,” admits.\*\*

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\* L. Eschwege, *Zement in Die Bank*, 1909, Vol. I, p. 115 et seq.

\*\* O. Jeidels, *Das Verhältnis der deutschen Grossbanken zur Industrie mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der Eisenindustrie* (*The Re-*

"The more developed an economic system is," writes Liefmann, an unblushing apologist of capitalism, "the more it resorts to risky enterprises, or enterprises abroad, to those which need a great deal of time to develop, or finally, to those which are only of local importance."\* The increased risk is connected in the long run with the prodigious increase of capital, which overflows the brim, as it were, flows abroad, etc. At the same time the extremely rapid rate of technical progress gives rise to increasing elements of disparity between the various spheres of national economy, to anarchy and crises. Liefmann is obliged to admit that: "In all probability mankind will see further important technical revolutions in the near future which will also affect the organization of the economic system" ... electricity and aviation.... "As a general rule, in such periods of radical economic change, speculation develops on a large scale." ...\*\*

Crises of every kind—economic crises most frequently, but not only these—in their turn increase very considerably the tendency towards concentration and towards monopoly. In this connection, the following reflections of Jeidels on the significance of the crisis of 1900, which, as we have already seen, marked the turning point in the history of modern monopoly, are exceedingly instructive:

"Side by side with the gigantic plants in the basic industries, the crisis of 1900 still found many plants organized on lines that today would be considered obsolete, the 'pure' " (non-combined) "plants, which had arisen on the crest of the industrial boom. The fall in prices and the falling off in demand put these 'pure' enterprises into a precarious position, which did not affect the gigantic combined enter-

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*relationship of the German Big Banks to Industry, with Special Reference to the Iron Industry—Tr.*), Leipzig 1905, p. 271.

\* R. Liefmann, *Beteiligungs- und Finanzierungsgesellschaften*, p. 434.

\*\* *Ibid.*, pp. 465-66.

prises at all or only affected them for a very short time. As a consequence of this the crisis of 1900 resulted in a far greater concentration of industry than the crisis of 1873: the latter crisis also produced a sort of selection of the best-equipped enterprises, but owing to the level of technical development at that time, this selection could not place the firms which successfully emerged from the crisis in a position of monopoly. Such a durable monopoly exists to a high degree in the gigantic enterprises in the modern iron and steel and electrical industries owing to their very complicated technique, far-reaching organization and magnitude of capital, and, to a lesser degree, in the engineering industry, certain branches of the metallurgical industry, transport, etc.”\*

(Monopoly! This is the last word in the “latest phase of capitalist development.” But we shall only have a very insufficient, incomplete, and poor notion of the real power and the significance of modern monopolies if we do not take into consideration the part played by the banks.)

## II. THE BANKS AND THEIR NEW ROLE

The principal and original function of banks is to serve as middlemen in the making of payments. In doing so they transform inactive money capital into active, that is, into capital yielding a profit; they collect all kinds of money revenues and place them at the disposal of the capitalist class.

As banking develops and becomes concentrated in a small number of establishments, the banks grow from humble middlemen into powerful monopolies having at their command almost the whole of the money capital of all the capitalists and small businessmen and also the larger

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\* Jeidels, *op. cit.*, p. 108.

part of the means of production and of the sources of raw materials of the given country and in a number of countries. This transformation of numerous humble middlemen into a handful of monopolists represents one of the fundamental processes in the growth of capitalism into capitalist imperialism; for this reason we must first of all deal with the concentration of banking.)

In 1907-08, the combined deposits of the German joint-stock banks, each having a capital of more than a million marks, amounted to 7,000,000,000 marks; in 1912-13, these deposits already amounted to 9,800,000,000 marks. An increase of 40 per cent in five years; and of the 2,800,000,000 increase, 2,750,000,000 was divided amongst 57 banks, each having a capital of more than 10,000,000 marks. The distribution of the deposits between big and small banks was as follows:\*

PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL DEPOSITS

	In 9 big Berlin Banks	In the other 48 banks with a capital of more than 10 million marks	In 115 banks with a capital of 1-10 million marks	In the small banks (with a capital of less than 1 million marks)
1907-08 . . .	47	32.5	16.5	4
1912-13 . . .	49	36	12	3

The small banks are being ousted by the big banks, of which only nine concentrate in their hands almost half the total deposits. But we have left out of account many important details, for instance, the transformation of numerous small banks practically into branches of the big banks, etc. Of this we shall speak later on.

At the end of 1913, Schulze-Gaevernitz estimated the deposits in the nine big Berlin banks at 5,100,000,000 marks,

\* Alfred Lansburgh, *Fünf Jahre deutsches Bankwesen (Five Years of German Banking—Tr.)* in *Die Bank*, 1913, No. 8, p. 728.

out of a total of about 10,000,000,000 marks. Taking into account not only the deposits, but the total bank capital, this author wrote: "At the end of 1909, the nine big Berlin banks, together with their affiliated banks, controlled 11,300,000,000 marks, that is, about 83 per cent of the total German bank capital. The Deutsche Bank, which together with its affiliated banks controls nearly 3,000,000,000 marks, represents, parallel with the Prussian State Railway Administration, the biggest and also the most decentralized accumulation of capital in the old world."\*

(We have emphasized the reference to the "affiliated" banks because this is one of the most important distinguishing features of modern capitalist concentration. The big enterprises and the banks in particular, not only completely absorb the small ones, but also "annex" them, subordinate them, bring them into their "own" group or "concern" (to use the technical term) by acquiring "holdings" in their capital, by purchasing or exchanging shares, by a system of credits, etc., etc.) Professor Liefmann has written a voluminous "work" of about 500 pages describing modern "holding and finance companies,"\*\* unfortunately adding "theoretical" reflections of a very poor quality to what is frequently undigested raw material. To what results this "holding" system leads as regards concentration is best illustrated in the book written on the big German banks by Riesser, himself a "banker." But before examining his data, we will quote a concrete example of the "holding" system.

The Deutsche Bank "group" is one of the biggest, if not the biggest, of the big banking groups. In order to trace the main threads which connect all the banks in this group, it is necessary to distinguish between "holdings" of the

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\* Schulze-Gaevernitz, *Die deutsche Kreditbank in Grundriss der Sozialökonomik* (*The German Credit Bank in Outline of Social Economics—Tr.*), Tübingen 1915, pp. 12 and 137.

\*\* R. Liefmann, *Beteiligungs- und Finanzierungsgesellschaften. Eine Studie über den modernen Kapitalismus und das Effektenwesen*, 1. Aufl., Jena 1909, p. 212.

first, second and third degree, or what amounts to the same thing, between dependence (of the lesser banks on the Deutsche Bank) in the first, second and third degree. We then obtain the following picture:\*

		Dependence, 1st degree	Dependence, 2nd degree	Dependence, 3rd degree
The Deutsche Bank has holdings	Permanently	in 17 banks	of which 9 in 34	of which 4 in 7
	For an indefinite period	" 5 "	—	—
	Occasionally	" 8 "	" " 5 " 14 "	" " 2 " 2
<i>Total</i>		in 30 banks	of which 14 in 48	of which 6 in 9

Included in the eight banks dependent on the Deutsche Bank in the "first degree," "occasionally," are three foreign banks: one Austrian (the Wiener Bankverein) and two Russian (the Siberian Commercial Bank and the Russian Bank for Foreign Trade). Altogether, the Deutsche Bank group comprises, directly and indirectly, partially and totally, 87 banks; and the total capital—its own and others which it controls—is estimated at between two and three billion marks.

(It is obvious that a bank which stands at the head of such a group, and which enters into agreement with half a dozen other banks only slightly smaller than itself for the purpose of conducting exceptionally big and profitable financial operations like floating state loans, has already outgrown the part of "middleman" and has become a combine of a handful of monopolists.)

The rapidity with which the concentration of banking proceeded in Germany at the end of the nineteenth and

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\* Alfred Lansburgh, *Das Beteiligungssystem im deutschen Bankwesen* (*The Holding System in German Banking—Tr.*), in *Die Bank* 1910, 1, p. 500.

the beginning of the twentieth centuries is shown by the following data which we quote in an abbreviated form from Riesser:

## SIX BIG BERLIN BANKS

Year	Branches in Germany	Deposit banks and exchange offices	Constant holdings in German joint-stock banks	Total establishments
1895 . . . .	16	14	1	42
1900 . . . .	21	40	8	80
1911 . . . .	104	276	63	450

We see the rapid expansion of a close network of canals which cover the whole country, centralizing all capital and all revenues, transforming thousands and thousands of scattered economic enterprises into a single national capitalist, and then into a world capitalist economy. The "decentralization" that Schulze-Gaevernitz, as an exponent of present-day bourgeois political economy, speaks of in the passage previously quoted, really means the subordination of an increasing number of formerly relatively "independent," or rather, strictly local economic units, to a single centre. In reality it is *centralization*, the enhancement of the role, the importance and the power of monopolist giants.

In the older capitalist countries this "banking network" is still more close. In Great Britain and Ireland, in 1910, there were in all 7,151 branches of banks. Four big banks had more than 400 branches each (from 447 to 689); four had more than 200 branches each, and eleven more than 100 each.

In France, *three* very big banks, Crédit Lyonnais the Comptoir National and the Société Générale, extended their operations and their network of branches in the following manner.\*

\* Eugen Kaufmann, *Das französische Bankwesen*, Tübingen 1911, pp. 356 and 362.

	Number of branches and offices			Capital in million francs	
	In the provinces	In Paris	Total	Own capital	Borrowed capital
1870 . . . .	47	17	64	200	427
1890 . . . .	192	66	258	265	1,245
1909 . . . .	1,033	196	1,229	887	4,363

In order to show the "connections" of a big modern bank, Riesser gives the following figures of the number of letters dispatched and received by the Disconto-Gesellschaft, one of the biggest banks in Germany and in the world (its capital in 1914 amounted to 300,000,000 marks):

	Letters received	Letters dispatched
1852 . . . .	6,135	6,292
1870 . . . .	85,800	87,513
1900 . . . .	533,102	626,043

The accounts of the big Paris bank, the Crédit Lyonnais, increased from 28,535 in 1875 to 633,539 in 1912.\*

These simple figures show perhaps better than lengthy disquisitions how the concentration of capital and the growth of bank turnover are radically changing the significance of the banks. Scattered capitalists are transformed into a single collective capitalist. When carrying the current accounts of a few capitalists, a bank, as it were, transacts a purely technical and exclusively auxiliary operation. When, however, this operation grows to enormous dimensions we find that a handful of monopolists subordinate to their will all the operations, both commercial and industrial, of the whole of capitalist society; for they obtain the

\* Jean Lescure, *L'épargne en France (Savings in France—Tr.)*, Paris 1914, p. 52.



opportunity—by means of their banking connections, their current accounts and other financial operations—first, to *ascertain exactly* the financial position of the various capitalists, then to *control* them, to influence them by restricting or enlarging, facilitating or hindering credits, and finally *entirely determine* their fate, determining their income, deprive them of capital, or permit them to increase their capital rapidly and to enormous dimensions, etc.)

We have just mentioned the 300,000,000 marks' capital of the Disconto-Gesellschaft of Berlin. This increase of the capital of the bank was one of the incidents in the struggle for hegemony between two of the biggest Berlin banks—the Deutsche Bank and the Disconto. In 1870, the first was still a novice and had a capital of only 15,000,000 marks, while the second a capital of 30,000,000 marks. In 1908, the first had a capital of 200,000,000, while the second had 170,000,000. In 1914, the first increased its capital to 250,000,000 and the second, by merging with another first-class big bank, the Schaaffhausenscher Bankverein, increased its capital to 300,000,000. And of course, this struggle for hegemony went hand in hand with the more and more frequent conclusion of "agreements" of an increasingly durable character between the two banks. The following are the conclusions that this development of banking forces upon specialists in banking who regard economic questions from a standpoint which does not in the least exceed the bounds of the most moderate and cautious bourgeois reformism:

Commenting on the increase of the capital of the Disconto-Gesellschaft to 300,000,000 marks, the German review, *Die Bank*, wrote: "Other banks will follow this same path and in time the three hundred men, who today govern Germany economically, will gradually be reduced to fifty, twenty-five or still fewer. It cannot be expected that this latest move towards concentration will be confined to banking. The close relations that exist between individual banks naturally lead to the bringing together of the industrial syndi-

cates which these banks favour. . . . One fine morning we shall wake up in surprise to see nothing but trusts before our eyes, and to find ourselves faced with the necessity of substituting state monopolies for private monopolies. However, we have nothing to reproach ourselves with, except for having allowed things to follow their own course, slightly accelerated by the manipulation of stocks.”\*)

This is an example of the impotence of bourgeois journalism which differs from bourgeois science only in that the latter is less sincere and strives to obscure the essence of the matter, to conceal the wood by trees. To be “surprised” at the results of concentration, to “reproach” the government of capitalist Germany, or capitalist “society” (“ourselves”), to fear that the introduction of stocks and shares might “accelerate” concentration in the same way as the German “cartel” specialist Tschierschky fears the American trusts and “prefers” the German cartels on the grounds that they “may not, like the trusts, excessively accelerate technical and economic progress”\*\*—is not this impotence?

But facts remain facts. There are no trusts in Germany; there are “only” cartels—but Germany is *governed* by not more than three hundred magnates of capital, and the number of these is constantly diminishing. At all events, in all capitalist countries, notwithstanding all the differences in their banking laws, banks greatly intensify and accelerate the process of concentration of capital and the formation of monopolies.

The banking system “presents indeed the form of common bookkeeping and of the distribution of means of production on a social scale, but only the form,” wrote Marx in *Capital* half a century ago (Russ. trans. Vol. III, part II, p. 144). The figures we have quoted on the growth of bank capital, on the increase in the number of the branches

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\* A. Lansburgh, *Die Bank mit den 300 Millionen in Die Bank*, 1914, I, p. 426.

\*\* S. Tschierschky, *op. cit.*, p. 128.

and offices of the biggest banks, the increase in the number of their accounts, etc., present a concrete picture of this "common bookkeeping" of the *whole* capitalist class; and not only of the capitalists, for the banks collect, even though temporarily, all kinds of money revenues—of small businessmen, office clerks, and of a tiny upper stratum of the working class. It is "common distribution of means of production" that, from the formal aspect, *grows* out of the modern banks, numbering some three to six of the biggest in France, and six to eight in Germany, control billions and billions. In *substance*, however, the distribution of means of production is by no means "common," but private, i.e., it conforms to the interests of big capital, and primarily, of huge, monopoly capital, which operates under conditions in which the masses of the population live in want, in which the whole development of agriculture hopelessly lags behind the development of industry, while within industry itself the "heavy industries" exact tribute from all other branches of industry.

In the matter of socializing capitalist economy the savings banks and post offices are beginning to compete with the banks; they are more "decentralized," i.e., their influence extends to a greater number of localities, to more remote places, to wider sections of the population. Here is the data collected by an American commission on the comparative growth of deposits in banks and savings banks:\*

DEPOSITS (IN BILLIONS OF MARKS)

	England		France		Germany		
	Banks	Savings Banks	Banks	Savings Banks	Banks	Credit Societies	Savings Banks
1880 . . .	8.4	1.6	?	0.9	0.5	0.4	2.6
1888 . . .	12.4	2.0	1.5	2.1	1.1	0.4	4.5
1908 . . .	23.2	4.2	3.7	4.2	7.1	2.2	13.9

\* *Statistics of the National Monetary Commission*, quoted in *Die Bank*, 1910, 1, p. 1200.

As they pay interest at the rate of 4 per cent and  $4\frac{1}{4}$  per cent on deposits, the savings banks must seek "profitable" investments for their capital, they must deal in bills, mortgages, etc. The boundaries between the banks and the savings banks "become more and more obliterated." (The Chambers of Commerce of Bochum and Erfurt, for example, demand that savings banks be "prohibited" from engaging in "purely" banking business, such as discounting bills; they demand the limitation of the "banking" operations of the post office.\* The banking magnates seem to be afraid that state monopoly will steal upon them from an unexpected quarter. It goes without saying, however, that this fear is no more than the expression of the rivalry, so to speak, between two department managers in the same office; for, on the one hand, the billions entrusted to the savings banks are in the final analysis actually controlled by *these very same* bank capital magnates, while, on the other hand, state monopoly in capitalist society is merely a means of increasing and guaranteeing the income of millionaires in one branch of industry or another who are on the verge of bankruptcy.)

(The change from the old type of capitalism, in which free competition predominated, to the new capitalism, in which monopoly reigns, is expressed, among other things, by a decline in the importance of the Stock Exchange. The review, *Die Bank*, writes: "The Stock Exchange has long ceased to be the indispensable medium of circulation that it was formerly when the banks were not yet able to place the bulk of new issues with their clients."\*\*

"'Every bank is a Stock Exchange,' and the bigger the bank, and the more successful the concentration of banking, the truer does this modern aphorism become."\*\*\* "While formerly, in the 'seventies, the Stock Exchange,

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\* *Die Bank*, 1913, pp. 811, 1022; 1914, p. 713.

\*\* *Die Bank*, 1914, I, p. 316.

\*\*\* Dr. Oscar Stille, *Geld- und Bankwesen*, Berlin 1907, p. 169.

flushed with the exuberance of youth" (a "subtle" allusion to the Stock Exchange crash of 1873, to the company promotion scandals, etc.), "opened the era of the industrialization of Germany, nowadays the banks and industry are able to 'do it alone.' The domination of our big banks over the Stock Exchange... is nothing else than the expression of the completely organized German industrial state. If the domain of the automatically functioning economic laws is thus restricted, and if the domain of conscious regulation by the banks is considerably enlarged, the national economic responsibility of a few guiding heads is immensely increased," so writes the German Professor Schulze-Gaevernitz,\* an apologist of German imperialism, who is regarded as an authority by the imperialists of all countries, and who tries to gloss over a "detail," viz., that the "conscious regulation" of economic life by the banks consists in the fleecing of the public by a handful of "completely organized" monopolists. The task of a bourgeois professor is not to lay bare the entire mechanism, or to expose all the machinations of the bank monopolists, but rather to present them in a favourable light.)

In the same way, Riesser, a still more authoritative economist and himself "a banker," makes shift with meaningless phrases in order to explain away undeniable facts: "... (the Stock Exchange is steadily losing the feature which is absolutely essential for national economy as a whole and for the circulation of securities in particular—that of being not only a most exact measuring-rod, but also an almost automatic regulator of the economic movements which converge on it.)\*\*)

In other words, (the old capitalism, the capitalism of free competition with its indispensable regulator, the Stock Exchange, is passing away. A new capitalism has come to

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\* Schulze-Gaevernitz, *Die deutsche Kreditbank in Grundriss der Sozialökonomik*, Tübingen 1915, p. 101.

\*\* Riesser, *op. cit.*, 4th ed., p. 629.

take its place, bearing obvious features of something transient, a mixture of free competition and monopoly. The question naturally arises: *to what* is this new capitalism "passing"? But the bourgeois scholars are afraid to raise this question.

"Thirty years ago, businessmen, freely competing against one another, performed nine-tenths of the work connected with their business other than manual labour. At the present time, nine-tenths of this "brain work" is performed by *officials*. Banking is in the forefront of this evolution."\* This admission by Schulze-Gaevernitz brings us once again to the question: to what is this new capitalism, capitalism in its imperialist stage, passing? — — —

Among the few banks which remain at the head of all capitalist economy as a result of the process of concentration, there is naturally to be observed an increasingly marked tendency towards monopolist agreements, towards a *bank trust*. In America, not nine, but *two* very big banks, those of the billionaires Rockefeller and Morgan, control a capital of eleven billion marks.\*\* In Germany the absorption of the Schaaffhausenscher Bankverein by the Disconto-Gesellschaft to which we referred above, was commented on in the following terms by the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, an organ of the Stock Exchange interests:

"The concentration movement of the banks is narrowing the circle of establishments from which it is possible to obtain credits, and is consequently increasing the dependence of big industry upon a small number of banking groups. In view of the close connection between industry and the financial world, the freedom of movement of industrial companies which need banking capital is restricted. For this reason, big industry is watching the growing trustification of the banks with mixed feelings. Indeed, we have

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\* Schulze-Gaevernitz, *Die deutsche Kreditbank in Grundriss der Sozialökonomik*, Tübingen 1915, p. 151.

\*\* *Die Bank*, 1912, 1, p. 435.

repeatedly seen the beginnings of certain agreements between the individual big banking concerns, which aim at restricting competition.”\*

Again and again, the final word in the development of banking is monopoly.

As regards the close connection between the banks and industry, it is precisely in this sphere that the new role of the banks is, perhaps, most strikingly felt. When a bank discounts a bill for a firm, opens a current account for it, etc., these operations, taken separately, do not in the least diminish its independence, and the bank plays no other part than that of a humble middleman. But when such operations are multiplied and become an established practice, when the bank “collects” in its own hands enormous amounts of capital, when the running of a current account for a given firm enables the bank—and this is what happens—to obtain fuller and more detailed information about the economic position of its client, the result is that the industrial capitalist becomes more completely dependent on the bank.

At the same time a personal union, so to speak, is established between the banks and the biggest industrial and commercial enterprises, the merging of one with another through the acquisition of shares, through the appointment of bank directors to the Supervisory Boards (or Boards of Directors) of industrial and commercial enterprises, and vice versa. The German economist, Jeidels, has compiled most detailed data on this form of concentration of capital and of enterprises. Six of the biggest Berlin banks were represented by their directors in 344 industrial companies; and by their board members in 407 others, making a total of 751 companies. In 289 of these companies they either had two of their representatives on each of the respective Supervisory Boards, or held the posts of chairmen. We find these industrial and commercial companies in the most di-

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\* Quoted by Schulze-Gaevernitz, *ibid.*, p. 155.

verse branches of industry: insurance, transport, restaurants, theatres, art industry, etc. On the other hand, on the Supervisory Boards of these six banks (in 1910) were fifty-one of the biggest industrialists, including the director of Krupp, of the powerful "Hapag" (Hamburg-American Line), etc., etc. From 1895 to 1910, each of these six banks participated in the share and bond issues of many hundreds of industrial companies (the number ranging from 281 to 419).\*

The "personal union" between the banks and industry is supplemented by the "personal union" between both and the government. "Seats on Supervisory Boards," writes Jeidels, are freely offered to persons of title, also to ex-civil servants, who are able to do a great deal to facilitate" (!) "relations with the authorities." ... "Usually, on the Supervisory Board of a big bank, there is a member of parliament or a Berlin city councillor."

(The building, so to speak, of the big capitalist monopolies is therefore going on full steam ahead in all "natural" and "supernatural" ways. A sort of division of labour is being systematically developed amongst some hundreds of kings of finance who reign over modern capitalist society:

"Simultaneously with this widening of the sphere of activity of certain big industrialists" (joining the boards of banks, etc.) "and with the allocation of provincial bank managers to definite industrial regions, there is a growth of specialization among the directors of the big banks. Generally speaking, this specialization is only conceivable when banking is conducted on a large scale, and particularly when it has widespread connections with industry. This division of labour proceeds along two lines: on the one hand, relations with industry as a whole are entrusted to one director, as his special function; on the other, each director assumes the supervision of several separate enterprises, or of a group of enterprises in the same branch of industry

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\* Jeidels, *op. cit.*; Riesser, *op. cit.*



or having similar interests." ... (Capitalism has already reached the stage of organized *supervision* of individual enterprises.) ... "One specializes in German industry, sometimes even in West-German industry alone" (the West is the most industrialized part of Germany), "others specialize in relations with foreign states and foreign industry, in information about the personality of industrialists and others, in Stock Exchange questions, etc. Besides, each bank director is often assigned a special locality or a special branch of industry; one works chiefly on Supervisory Boards of electric companies, another chemical, brewing, or beet-sugar plants, a third in a few isolated industrial enterprises, but at the same time works on the Supervisory Boards of insurance companies.... In short, there can be no doubt that the growth in the dimensions and diversity of the big banks' operations is accompanied by an increase in the division of labour among their directors with the object (and result) of, so to speak, lifting them somewhat out of pure banking and making them better experts, better judges of the general problems of industry and the special problems of each branch of industry, thus making them more capable of acting within the respective bank's industrial sphere of influence. This system is supplemented by the banks' endeavours to elect to their Supervisory Boards men who are experts in industrial affairs, such as industrialists, former officials, especially those formerly in the railway service or in mining," etc.\*

We find the same system only in a slightly different form in French banking. For instance, one of the three biggest French banks, the *Crédit Lyonnais*, has organized a financial research service (*service des études financières*), which permanently employs over fifty engineers, statisticians, economists, lawyers, etc. This costs from six to seven hundred thousand francs annually. The service is in turn

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\* Jéidels, *op. cit.*, p. 157.

divided into eight departments: one specializes in collecting information concerning industrial establishments, another studies general statistics, a third with railway and steamship companies, a fourth, securities, a fifth, financial reports, 'etc.\*

The result is, on the one hand, the ever growing merger, or, as N. I. Bukharin aptly calls it, coalescence, of bank and industrial capital and, on the other hand, the growth of the banks into institutions of a truly "universal character." On this question we think it necessary to quote the exact terms used by Jeidels, who has best studied the subject:

"An examination of the sum total of industrial relationships reveals the *universal character* of the financial establishments working on behalf of industry. Unlike other kinds of banks, and contrary to the demand sometimes expressed in literature that banks should specialize in one kind of business or in one branch of industry in order to prevent the ground from slipping from under their feet—the big banks are striving to make their connections with industrial enterprises as varied as possible regarding locality and branch of industry and are striving to eliminate the unevenness in the distribution of capital among localities and branches of industry resulting from the historical development of individual enterprises." "One tendency is to make the connections with industry general; another tendency is to make them durable and close. In the six big banks both these tendencies are realized, not in full, but to a considerable extent and to an equal degree."

Quite often industrial and commercial circles complain of the "terrorism" of the banks. And it is not surprising that such complaints are heard, for the big banks "command," as will be seen from the following example. On November 19, 1901, one of the big, so-called Berlin "D" banks (the names of the four biggest banks begin with the letter D) wrote to the Board of Directors of the German

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\* An article by Eug. Kaufmann on French banks in *Die Bank*, 1909, 2, p. 851 et seq.

Central Northwest Cement Syndicate in the following terms: "As we learn from the notice you published in a certain newspaper of the 18th inst., we must reckon with the possibility that the next general meeting of your syndicate, to be held on the 30th of this month, may decide on measures which are likely to effect changes in your undertaking which are unacceptable to us. We deeply regret that, for these reasons, we are obliged henceforth to withdraw the credit which had been hitherto allowed you. . . . But if the said next general meeting does not decide upon measures which are unacceptable to us, and if we receive suitable guarantees on this matter for the future, we shall be quite willing to open negotiations with you on the grant of a new credit."\*

As a matter of fact, this is small capital's old complaint about being oppressed by big capital, but in this case it was a whole syndicate that fell into the category of "small" capital! The old struggle between small and big capital is being resumed at a new and immeasurably higher stage of development. It stands to reason that the big banks' enterprises, worth billions, can accelerate technical progress with means that cannot possibly be compared with those of the past. The banks, for example, set up special technical research societies, and, of course, only "friendly" industrial enterprises benefit from their work. To this category belong the Electric Railway Research Association, the Central Bureau of Scientific and Technical Research, etc.

The directors of the big banks themselves cannot fail to see that new conditions of national economy are being created; but they are powerless in the face of these phenomena.

"Anyone who has watched, in recent years," writes Jeidels, "the changes of incumbents of directorships and seats on the Supervisory Boards of the big banks, cannot fail to have noticed that power is gradually passing into the hands of men who consider the active intervention of

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\* Dr. Oscar Stillich, *Geld- und Bankwesen*, Berlin 1907, p. 148.

the big banks in the general development of industry to be necessary and of increasing importance. Between these new men and the old bank directors, disagreements of a business and often of a personal nature are growing on this subject. The issue is whether or not the banks, as credit institutions, will suffer from this intervention in industry, whether they are sacrificing tried principles and an assured profit to engage in a field of activity which has nothing in common with their role as middlemen in providing credit, and which is leading the banks into a field where they are more than ever before exposed to the blind forces of trade fluctuations. This is the opinion of many of the older bank directors, while most of the young men consider active intervention in industry to be a necessity as great as that which gave rise, simultaneously with big modern industry, to the big banks and modern industrial banking. The two parties are agreed only on one point: that there are neither firm principles nor a concrete aim in the new activities of the big banks.”\*

The old capitalism has had its day. The new capitalism represents a transition towards something. It is hopeless, of course, to seek for “firm principles and a concrete aim” for the purpose of “reconciling” monopoly with free competition. The admission of the practical men has quite a different ring from the official praises of the charms of “organized” capitalism sung by its apologists, Schulze-Gaevernitz, Liefmann and similar “theoreticians.”

At precisely what period were the “new activities” of the big banks finally established? Jeidels gives us a fairly exact answer to this important question:

“The connections between the banks and industrial enterprises, with their new content, their new forms and their new organs, namely, the big banks which are organized on both a centralized and a decentralized basis, were

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\* Jeidels, *op. cit.*, pp. 183-84.

scarcely a characteristic economic phenomenon before the 'nineties; in one sense, indeed this initial date may be advanced to the year 1897, when the important 'mergers' took place and when, for the first time, the new form of decentralized organization was introduced to suit the industrial policy of the banks. This starting point could perhaps be placed at an even later date, for it was the crisis of 1900 that enormously accelerated and intensified the process of concentration of industry and of banking, consolidated that process, for the first time transformed the connection with industry into the actual monopoly of the big banks, and made this connection much closer and more active."\*

Thus, the twentieth century marks the turning point from the old capitalism to the new, from the domination of capital in general to the domination of finance capital.

### III. FINANCE CAPITAL AND THE FINANCIAL OLIGARCHY

“A steadily increasing proportion of capital in industry,” writes Hilferding, “ceases to belong to the industrialists who employ it. They obtain the use of it only through the medium of the banks which, in relation to them, represent the owners of the capital. On the other hand, the bank is forced to sink an increasing share of its funds in industry. Thus, to an ever-increasing degree the banker is being transformed into an industrial capitalist. This bank capital, i.e., capital in money form, which is thus actually transformed into industrial capital, I call ‘finance capital.’” “Finance capital is capital controlled by banks and employed by industrialists.”\*\*)

This definition is incomplete in so far as it is silent on one extremely important fact: the increase of concentration of production and of capital to such an extent that con-

\* *Ibid.*, p. 181.

\*\* R. Hilferding, *Finance Capital*, Moscow 1912, pp. 338-39.

centration leads, and has led, to monopoly. But throughout the whole of his work, and particularly in the two chapters which precede the one from which this definition is taken, Hilferding stresses the part played by *capitalist monopolies*.

The concentration of production; the monopolies arising therefrom; the merging or coalescence of the banks with industry—such is the history of the rise of finance capital and such is the content of this term.

We now have to describe how, under the general conditions of commodity production and private property, the “business operations” of capitalist monopolies inevitably become the domination of a financial oligarchy. It should be noted that the representatives of bourgeois German—and not only German—science, like Riesser, Schulze-Gaevernitz, Liefmann and others, are all apologists of imperialism and of finance capital. Instead of revealing the “mechanics” of the formation of an oligarchy, its methods, the size of its revenues “innocent and sinful,” its connections with parliaments, etc., etc., they obscure and embellish them. They evade these “vexed questions” by pompous and vague phrases, appeals to the “sense of responsibility” of bank directors, by praising “the sense of duty” of Prussian officials, giving serious study to the petty details of absolutely ridiculous parliamentary bills for the “supervision” and “regulation” of monopolies, playing spillikins with theories, like, for example, the following “scientific” definition, arrived at by Professor Liefmann: “***Commerce is an occupation having for its object: collecting goods, storing them and making them available.***”\* (The Professor’s bold-face italics.) . . . From this it would follow that commerce existed in the time of primitive man, who knew nothing about exchange, and that it will exist under Socialism!

But the monstrous facts concerning the monstrous rule

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\* R. Liefmann, *op. cit.*, p. 476.

of the financial oligarchy are so glaring that in all capitalist countries, in America, France and Germany, a whole literature has sprung up, written from the *bourgeois* point of view, but which, nevertheless, gives a fairly truthful picture and criticism—petty-bourgeois, naturally—of this oligarchy.

The "holding system," to which we have already briefly referred above, should be made the cornerstone. The German economist, Heymann, probably the first to call attention to this matter, describes the essence of it in this way:

"The head of the concern controls the principal company" (literally: the "mother company"); "the latter reigns over the subsidiary companies" ("daughter companies") "which in their turn control still other subsidiaries" ["grand-child companies"], "etc. In this way, it is possible with a comparatively small capital to dominate immense spheres of production. Indeed, if holding 50 per cent of the capital is always sufficient to control a company, the head of the concern needs only one million to control eight million in the second subsidiaries. And if this 'interlocking' is extended, it is possible with one million to control sixteen million, thirty-two million, etc."\*

As a matter of fact, experience shows that it is sufficient to own 40 per cent of the shares of a company in order to direct its affairs,\*\* since a certain number of small, scattered shareholders find it impossible, in practice, to attend general meetings, etc. The "democratization" of the ownership of shares, from which the bourgeois sophists and opportunist so-called "Social-Democrats" expect (or say that they expect) the "democratization of capital," the strengthening of the role and significance of small-scale production, etc., is, in fact, one of the ways of increasing the power of the financial oligarchy. Incidentally, this is why, in the more advanced, or in the older and more "experienced"

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\* Hans Gideon Heymann, *Die gemischten Werke im deutschen Grosseisengewerbe*, Stuttgart 1904, pp. 268-69.

\*\* Liefmann, *Beteiligungsgesellschaften*, etc., 1st ed., p. 258.

capitalist countries, the law allows the issue of shares of smaller denomination. In Germany, the law does not permit the issue of shares of less than one thousand marks denomination, and the magnates of German finance look with an envious eye at England, where the issue of one-pound shares (=20 marks, about 10 rubles) is permitted. Siemens, one of the biggest industrialists and "financial kings" in Germany, told the Reichstag on June 7, 1900, that "the one-pound share is the basis of British imperialism."\* This merchant has a much deeper and more "Marxian" understanding of imperialism than a certain disreputable writer who is held to be one of the founders of Russian Marxism and believes that imperialism is a bad habit of a certain nation. . . .

But the "holding system" not only serves enormously to increase the power of the monopolists; it also enables them to resort with impunity to all sorts of shady and dirty tricks to cheat the public, for the directors of the "mother company" are not legally responsible for the "daughter company," which is supposed to be "independent," and *through the medium* of which they can "pull off" *anything*. Here is an example taken from the German review, *Die Bank*, for May 1914:

"The Spring Steel Company of Kassel was regarded some years ago as being one of the most profitable enterprises in Germany. Through bad management its dividends fell from 15 per cent to nil. It appears that the Board, without consulting the shareholders, had loaned *six million marks* to one of its 'daughter companies,' the Hassia, Ltd., which had a nominal capital of only some hundreds of thousands of marks. This commitment, amounting to nearly treble the capital of the 'mother company,' was never mentioned in its balance sheets. This omission was quite legal and could be hushed up for two whole years because it did not violate any point of company law. The chairman

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\* Schulze-Gaevernitz in *Grdr. d. S. Oek.*, V. 2, p. 110.



of the Supervisory Board, who as the responsible head had signed the false balance sheets, was, and still is, the president of the Kassel Chamber of Commerce. The shareholders only heard of the loan to the Hassia, Ltd., long afterwards, when it had been proved to have been a mistake"... (the writer should put this word in quotation marks) ... "and when Spring Steel shares dropped nearly 100 per cent, because those in the know were getting rid of them....

"*This typical example of balance-sheet jugglery, quite common in joint-stock companies, explains why their Boards of Directors are willing with a far lighter heart to undertake risky transactions than individual businessmen. Modern methods of drawing up balance sheets not only make it possible to conceal doubtful undertakings from the ordinary shareholder, but also allow the people most concerned to escape the consequence of unsuccessful speculation by selling their shares in time while the individual businessman risks his own skin in everything he does....*

"The balance sheets of many joint-stock companies put us in mind of the palimpsests of the Middle Ages from which the visible inscription had first to be erased in order to discover beneath it another inscription giving the real meaning of the document." (Palimpsests are parchment documents from which the original inscription has been obliterated and another inscription imposed.)

"The simplest and, therefore, most common procedure for making balance sheets indecipherable is to divide a single business into several parts by setting up 'daughter companies'—or by annexing such. The advantages of this system for various objects—legal and illegal—are so evident that big companies which do not employ it are quite the exception."\*

As an example of a huge monopolist company that extensively employs this system, the author quotes the fa-

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\* L. Eschwege, *Tochtergesellschaften* (*Subsidiary Companies—Tr.*) in *Die Bank*, 1914, 1, p. 545.

mous General Electric Company (to which we shall refer again later on). In 1912, it was calculated that this company held shares in 175 to 200 other companies, dominating them, of course, and thus controlling a total capital of about 1,500,000,000 marks.\*

All rules of control, the publication of balance sheets, the drawing up of balance sheets according to a definite form, the public auditing of accounts, etc., the things about which well-intentioned professors and officials—that is, those imbued with the good intention of defending and embellishing capitalism—discourse to the public, are of no avail. For private property is sacred, and no one can be prohibited from buying, selling, exchanging or mortgaging shares, etc.

The extent to which this “holding system” has developed in the big Russian banks may be judged by the figures given by E. Agahd, who for fifteen years was an official of the Russo-Chinese Bank and who, in May 1914, published a book, not altogether correctly entitled *Big Banks and the World Market*.\*\* The author divides the big Russian banks into two main categories: a) banks that come under the “holding system,” and b) “independent” banks—“independence,” however, being arbitrarily taken to mean independence of foreign banks. The author divides the first group into three sub-groups: 1) German holdings, 2) British holdings, and 3) French holdings, having in view the “holdings” and domination of the big foreign banks of the particular country mentioned. The author divides the cap-

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\* Kurt Heinig, *Der Weg des Elektrotrusts* (The Path of the Electric Trust—Tr.) in *Neue Zeit*, 1912, 30 Jahrg., 2, p. 484.

\*\* E. Agahd, *Grossbanken und Weltmarkt. Die wirtschaftliche und politische Bedeutung der Grossbanken im Weltmarkt unter Berücksichtigung ihres Einflusses auf Russlands Volkswirtschaft und die deutsch-russischen Beziehungen*. Berlin 1914. (*Big Banks and the World Market. The economic and political significance of the big banks on the world market, with reference to their influence on Russia's national economy and German-Russian relations.*—Tr.)

ital of the banks into "productively" invested capital (in industrial and commercial undertakings), and "speculatively" invested capital (in Stock Exchange and financial operations), assuming, from his petty-bourgeois reformist point of view, that it is possible, under capitalism, to separate the first form of investment from the second and to abolish the second form.

Here are the figures he supplies:

## BANK ASSETS

(According to Reports for October-November, 1913)  
in millions of rubles

Groups of Russian Banks	Capital invested		
	Productively	Speculatively	Total
a 1) Four banks: Siberian Commercial, Russian, International, and Discount Bank . . . . .	413.7	859.1	1,272.8
a 2) Two banks: Commercial and Industrial, and Russo-British . .	239.3	169.1	408.4
a 3) Five banks: Russian-Asiatic, St. Petersburg Private, Azov-Don, Union Moscow, Russo-French Commercial . . . . .	711.8	661.2	1,373.0
(11 banks) Total: . . . a) =	1,364.8	1,689.4	3,054.2
b) Eight banks: Moscow Merchants, Volga-Kama, Junker and Co., St. Petersburg Commercial (formerly Wawelberg), Bank of Moscow (formerly Ryabushinsky), Moscow Discount, Moscow Commercial, Moscow Private . . .	504.2	391.1	895.3
(19 banks) Total: . . . . .	1,869.0	2,080.5	3,949.5

According to these figures, of the approximately four billion rubles making up the "working" capital of the big banks, *more than three-fourths*, more than three billion, belonged to banks which in reality were only "daughter companies" of foreign banks, and chiefly of the Paris banks (the famous trio: Union Parisienne, Paris et Pays-Bas and Société Générale), and of the Berlin banks (particularly the Deutsche Bank and Disconto-Gesellschaft). Two of the biggest Russian banks, the Russian (Russian Bank for Foreign Trade) and the International (St. Petersburg International Commercial Bank), between 1906 and 1912 increased their capital from 44,000,000 to 98,000,000 rubles, and their reserves from 15,000,000 to 39,000,000 "employing three-fourths German capital." The first bank belongs to the Berlin Deutsche Bank "concern" and the second to the Berlin Disconto-Gesellschaft. The worthy Agahd is deeply indignant at the fact that the majority of the shares are held by the Berlin banks, and that, therefore, the Russian shareholders are powerless. Naturally, the country which exports capital skims the cream: for example, the Berlin Deutsche Bank, in placing the shares of the Siberian Commercial Bank on the Berlin market, kept them in its portfolio for a whole year, and then sold them at the rate of 193 for 100, that is, at nearly twice their nominal value, "earning" a profit of nearly 6,000,000 rubles, which Hilferding calls "promoter's profits."

Our author puts the total "capacity" of the principal St. Petersburg banks at 8,235,000,000 rubles, about  $8\frac{1}{4}$  billions, and the "holdings," or rather, the extent to which foreign banks dominated them, he estimates as follows: French banks, 55 per cent; English, 10 per cent; German, 35 per cent. The author calculates that of the total of 8,235,000,000 rubles of functioning capital, 3,687,000,000 rubles, or over 40 per cent, fall to the share of the syndicates Prodigol and Prodamet<sup>70</sup>—and the syndicates in the oil, metallurgical and cement industries. Thus, owing

to the formation of capitalist monopolies, the merging of bank and industrial capital has also made enormous strides in Russia.

Finance capital, concentrated in a few hands and exercising a virtual monopoly, exacts enormous and ever-increasing profits from the floating of companies, issue of stock, state loans, etc., strengthens the domination of the financial oligarchy and levies tribute upon the whole of society for the benefit of monopolists. Here is an example, taken from a multitude of others, of the "business" methods of the American trusts, quoted by Hilferding: in 1887, Havemeyer founded the Sugar Trust by amalgamating fifteen small firms, whose total capital amounted to 6,500,000 dollars. Suitably "watered," as the Americans say, the capital of the trust was declared to be 50,000,000 dollars. This "over-capitalization" anticipated the monopoly profits, in the same way as the United States Steel Corporation anticipates its future monopoly profits in buying up as many iron ore fields as possible. In fact, the Sugar Trust set up monopoly prices, which secured it such profits that it could pay 10 per cent dividend on capital "watered" *sevenfold, or about 70 per cent on the capital actually invested at the time the trust was formed!* In 1909, the capital of the Sugar Trust amounted to 90,000,000 dollars. In twenty-two years, it had increased its capital more than tenfold.

In France the domination of the "financial oligarchy" (*Against the Financial Oligarchy in France*, the title of the well-known book by Lysis, the fifth edition of which was published in 1908) assumed a form that was only slightly different. Four of the most powerful banks enjoy, not a relative, but an "absolute monopoly" in the issue of bonds. In reality, this is a "trust of big banks." And monopoly ensures monopolist profits from bond issues. Usually a borrowing country does not get more than 90 per cent of the sum of the loan, the remaining 10 per cent goes

to the banks and other middlemen. The profit made by the banks out of the Russo-Chinese loan of 400,000,000 francs amounted to 8 per cent; out of the Russian (1904) loan of 800,000,000 francs the profit amounted to 10 per cent; and out of the Moroccan (1904) loan of 62,500,000 francs it amounted to 18.75 per cent. Capitalism, which began its development with petty usury capital, is ending its development with gigantic usury capital. "The French," says Lysis, "are the usurers of Europe." All the conditions of economic life are being profoundly modified by this transformation of capitalism. With a stationary population, and stagnant industry, commerce and shipping, the "country" can grow rich by usury. "Fifty persons, representing a capital of 8,000,000 francs, can control 2,000,000,000 francs deposited in four banks." The "holding system," with which we are already familiar, leads to the same result. One of the biggest banks, the Société Générale, for instance, issues 64,000 bonds for its "daughter company," the Egyptian Sugar Refineries. The bonds are issued at 150 per cent, i.e., the bank gains 50 centimes on the franc. The dividends of the new company were found to be fictitious, the "public" lost from 90 to 100 million francs. "One of the directors of the Société Générale was a member of the board of directors of the Sugar Refineries." It is not surprising that the author is driven to the conclusion that "the French Republic is a financial monarchy"; "it is the complete domination of the financial oligarchy; the latter dominates over the press and the government."\*

The extraordinary high rate of profit obtained from the issue of securities, which is one of the principal functions of finance capital, plays a very important part in the development and consolidation of the financial oligarchy. "There is not a single business of this type within the country

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\* Lysis, *Contre l'oligarchie financière en France (Against the Financial Oligarchy in France—Tr.)*, 5 éd., Paris 1908, pp. 11, 12, 26, 39, 40, 48.

that brings in profits even approximately equal to those obtained from the flotation of foreign loans," says the German magazine, *Die Bank*.\*

"No banking operation brings in profits comparable with those obtained from the issue of securities!" According to the *German Economist*, the average annual profits made on the issue of industrial stock were as follows:

	Per cent		Per cent
1895 . . . . .	38.6	1898 . . . . .	67.7
1896 . . . . .	36.1	1899 . . . . .	66.9
1897 . . . . .	66.7	1900 . . . . .	55.2

"In the ten years from 1891 to 1900, more than a billion marks were 'earned' by issuing German industrial stock."\*\*

During periods of industrial boom, the profits of finance capital are immense, but during periods of depression, small and unsound businesses go out of existence; the big banks acquire "holdings" in them by buying them up for a mere song, or participate in profitable schemes for their "reconstruction" and "reorganization." In the "reconstruction" of undertakings which have been running at a loss, "the share capital is written down, that is, profits are distributed on a smaller capital and continue to be calculated on this smaller basis. Or, if the income has fallen to zero, new capital is called in, which, combined with the old and less remunerative capital, will bring in an adequate return. Incidentally," adds Hilferding, "all these reorganizations and reconstructions have a twofold significance for the banks: first, as profitable transactions; and secondly, as opportunities for securing control of the companies in difficulties."\*\*\*

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\* *Die Bank*, 1913, No. 7, p. 630.

\*\* Stillich, *op. cit.*, p. 143, also W. Sombart, *Die deutsche Volkswirtschaft im 19. Jahrhundert* (German National Economy in the Nineteenth Century—Tr.), 2. Aufl., 1909, S. 526, Anlage 8.

\*\*\* *Finance Capital*, p. 172.

Here is an instance. The Union Mining Company of Dortmund was founded in 1872. Share capital was issued to the amount of nearly 40,000,000 marks and the market price of the shares rose to 170 after it had paid a 12 per cent dividend for its first year. Finance capital skimmed the cream and earned a trifle of something like 28,000,000 marks. The principal sponsor of this company was that very big German Disconto-Gesellschaft which so successfully attained a capital of 300,000,000 marks. Later, the dividends of the Union declined to nil: the shareholders had to consent to a "writing down" of capital, that is, to losing some of it in order not to lose it all. By a series of "reconstructions," more than 73,000,000 marks were written off the books of the Union in the course of thirty years. "At the present time, the original shareholders of the company possess only 5 per cent of the nominal value of their shares,"\* but the banks "earned something" out of every "reconstruction."

(Speculation in land situated in the suburbs of rapidly-growing big towns is a particularly profitable operation for finance capital. The monopoly of the banks merges here with the monopoly of ground rent and with monopoly of the means of communications, since the rise in the price of land and the possibility of selling it profitably in allotments, etc., is mainly dependent on good means of communication with the centre of the town; and these means of communication are in the hands of large companies which are connected, by means of the holding system and by the distribution of positions on the directorates, with the interested banks.) As a result we get what the German writer, L. Eschwege, a contributor to *Die Bank*, who has made a special study of real estate business and mortgages, etc., calls a "bog." Frantic speculation in suburban building lots; collapse of building enterprises (like that of the Berlin

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\* Stillich, *op. cit.*, p. 138 and Liefmann, p. 51.



firm of Boswau and Knauer, which raked in as much as 100,000,000 marks with the help of the "sound and solid" Deutsche Bank—the latter, of course, acting through the holding system, i.e., secretly, behind the scenes, and getting out of it with a loss of "only" 12,000,000 marks), then the ruin of small proprietors and of workers who get nothing from the fictitious building firms, fraudulent deals with the "honest" Berlin police and administration for the purpose of gaining control of the issue of building site tenders, building licenses, etc., etc.\*

"American ethics," which the European professors and well-meaning bourgeois so hypocritically deplore, have, in the age of finance capital, become the ethics of literally every large city in every country.

At the beginning of 1914, there was talk in Berlin of the formation of a "transport trust," i.e., of establishing "community of interests" between the three Berlin transport undertakings: The city electric railway, the tramway company and the omnibus company. "We have known," wrote *Die Bank*, "that this plan is contemplated since it became known that the majority of the shares in the bus company had been acquired by the other two transport companies. . . . We may fully believe those who are pursuing this aim when they say that by uniting the transport services, they will secure economies, part of which will in time benefit the public. But the question is complicated by the fact that behind the transport trust that is being formed are the banks, which, if they desire, can subordinate the means of transportation, which they have monopolized, to the interests of their real estate business. To be convinced of the reasonableness of such a conjecture, we need only recall that the interests of the big bank that encouraged the formation of the Elevated Railway Company were already involved in it at the time the com-

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\* In *Die Bank*, 1913, p. 952. L. Eschwege, *Der Sumpf*, *ibid.*, 1912, 1, p. 223 et seq.

pany was formed. That is to say: the interests of this transport undertaking were interlocked with the real estate interests. The point is that the eastern line of this railway was to run through land which, when it became certain the line was to be laid down, this bank sold at an enormous profit for itself and for several partners in the transactions.”\*...

A monopoly, once it is formed and controls thousands of millions, inevitably penetrates into *every* sphere of public life, regardless of the form of government and all other “details.” In the economic literature of Germany one usually comes across obsequious praise of the integrity of the Prussian bureaucracy, and allusions to the French Panama scandal and to political corruption in America. But the fact is that *even* the bourgeois literature devoted to German banking matters constantly has to go far beyond the field of purely banking operations and to speak, for instance, about “the attraction of the banks” in reference to the increasing frequency with which public officials take employment with the banks, as follows: “How about the integrity of a state official who in his inmost heart is aspiring to a soft job in the Behrenstrasse?”\*\* (the street in Berlin in which the head office of the Deutsche Bank is situated). In 1909, the publisher of *Die Bank*, Alfred Lansburgh, wrote an article entitled “The Economic Significance of Byzantinism,” in which he incidentally referred to Wilhelm II’s tour of Palestine, and to “the immediate result of this journey, the construction of the Bagdad railway, that fatal ‘great product of German enterprise,’ which is more responsible for the ‘encirclement’ than all our political blunders put together.”\*\*\* (By encirclement is meant the policy of Edward VII to isolate Germany and

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\* *Verkehrstrust* in *Die Bank*, 1914, 1, p. 89.

\*\* *Der Zug zur Bank* (*The Attraction of the Bank—Tr.*) in *Die Bank*, 1909, 1, p. 79.

\*\*\* *Ibid.*, p. 301.

surround her with an imperialist anti-German alliance.) In 1911, Eschwege, the contributor to this same magazine to whom we have already referred, wrote an article entitled "Plutocracy and Bureaucracy," in which he exposed, for example, the case of a German official named Volker, who was a zealous member of the Cartel Committee and who, it turned out some time later, obtained a lucrative post in the biggest cartel, i.e., the Steel Syndicate. Similar cases, by no means casual, forced this bourgeois author to admit that "the economic liberty guaranteed by the German Constitution has become in many departments of economic life, a meaningless phrase" and that under the existing rule of the plutocracy, "even the widest political liberty cannot save us from being converted into a nation of unfree people."\*

As for Russia, we will limit ourselves to one example. Some years ago, all the newspapers announced that Davydov, the director of the Credit Department of the Treasury, had resigned his post to take employment with a certain big bank at a salary which, according to the contract, was to amount to over one million rubles in the course of several years. The Credit Department is an institution, the function of which is to "coordinate the activities of all the credit institutions of the country" and which grants subsidies to banks in St. Petersburg and Moscow amounting to between 800 and 1,000 million rubles.\*\* — — —

(It is characteristic of capitalism in general that the ownership of capital is separated from the application of capital to production, that money capital is separated from industrial or productive capital, and that the rentier who lives entirely on income obtained from money capital, is separated from the entrepreneur and from all who are directly concerned in the management of capital. Imperialism, or the domination of finance capital, is that highest

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\* *Ibid.*, 1911, 2, p. 825; 1913, 2, p. 962.

\*\* E. Agahd, *op. cit.*, p. 202.

stage of capitalism at which this separation reaches vast proportions. The supremacy of finance capital over all other forms of capital means the predominance of the rentier and of the financial oligarchy; it means the singling out of a small number of financially "powerful" states from among all the rest. The extent to which this process is going on may be judged from the statistics on emissions, i.e., the issue of all kinds of securities.)

In the *Bulletin of the International Statistical Institute*, A. Neymarck\* has published very comprehensive, complete and comparative figures covering the issue of securities all over the world, which have been repeatedly quoted in part in economic literature. The following are the totals he gives for decades:

#### TOTAL ISSUES IN BILLIONS OF FRANCS

(Decades)

1871-1880 . . . . .	76.1
1881-1890 . . . . .	64.5
1891-1900 . . . . .	100.4
1901-1910 . . . . .	197.8

In the 1870's, the total amount of issues for the whole world was high, owing particularly to the loans floated in connection with the Franco-Prussian War, and the company-promoting boom which set in in Germany after the war. On the whole, the increase is relatively not very rapid during the three last decades of the nineteenth century, and only in the first ten years of the twentieth century is an enormous increase observed of almost 100 per cent. Thus the beginning of the twentieth century marks the turning point, not only in regard to the growth

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\* *Bulletin de l'institut international de statistique*, t. XIX, livr. II, La Haye, 1912. Data concerning small states, second column, are approximately calculated by adding 20 per cent to the 1902 figures.

of monopolies (cartels, syndicates, trusts), of which we have already spoken, but also in regard to the growth of finance capital.

Neymarck estimates the total amount of issued securities current in the world in 1910 at about 815,000,000,000 francs. Deducting from this sum amounts which might have been duplicated, he reduces the total to 575-600 billion, which is distributed among the various countries as follows: (We will take 600,000,000,000.)

## FINANCIAL SECURITIES CURRENT IN 1910

(in billions of francs)

Great Britain . . . . .	142	} 479
United States . . . . .	132	
France . . . . .	110	
Germany . . . . .	95	
Russia . . . . .	31	
Austria-Hungary . . . . .	24	
Italy . . . . .	14	
Japan . . . . .	12	
Holland . . . . .	12.5	
Belgium . . . . .	7.5	
Spain . . . . .	7.5	
Switzerland . . . . .	6.25	
Denmark . . . . .	3.75	
Sweden, Norway, Rumania, etc. . . . .	2.5	
<hr/> <i>Total</i> . . . . .		600

From these figures we at once see standing out in sharp relief four of the richest capitalist countries, each of which holds securities to amounts ranging approximately from 100 to 150 billion francs. Of these four countries, two, England and France, are the oldest capitalist countries, and, as we shall see, possess the most colonies; the other two, the United States and Germany, are leading capitalist countries as regards rapidity of development and the

degree of extension of capitalist monopolies in industry. Together, these four countries own 479,000,000,000 francs, that is, nearly 80 per cent of the world's finance capital. In one way or another, nearly the whole of the rest of the world is more or less the debtor to and tributary of these international banker countries, these four "pillars" of world finance capital.

It is particularly important to examine the part which the export of capital plays in creating the international network of dependence and connections of finance capital.

#### IV. THE EXPORT OF CAPITAL

Typical of the old capitalism, when free competition had undivided sway, was the export of *goods*. Typical of the latest stage of capitalism, when monopolies rule, is the export of *capital*.

(Capitalism is commodity production at its highest stage of development, when labour power itself becomes a commodity. The growth of internal exchange, and particularly of international exchange, is the characteristic distinguishing feature of capitalism. Uneven and spasmodic development of individual enterprises, of individual branches of industry and individual countries, is inevitable under the capitalist system. England became a capitalist country before any other, and by the middle of the nineteenth century, having adopted free trade, claimed to be the "workshop of the world," the purveyor of manufactured goods to all countries, which in exchange were to keep her supplied with raw materials. But in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, *this* monopoly was already undermined; for other countries, sheltering themselves by "protective" tariffs, developed into independent capitalist states. On the threshold of the twentieth century we see the formation of a new type of monopoly: firstly, mo-

monopolist capitalist combines in all capitalistically developed countries; secondly, the monopolist position of a few very rich countries, in which the accumulation of capital has reached gigantic proportions. An enormous "superabundance of capital" has arisen in the advanced countries.)

It goes without saying that if capitalism could develop agriculture, which today frightfully lags behind industry everywhere, if it could raise the standard of living of the masses, who are everywhere still half-starved and poverty-stricken, in spite of the amazing technical progress, there could be no talk of a superabundance of capital. This "argument" is very often advanced by the petty-bourgeois critics of capitalism. But if capitalism did these things it would not be capitalism; for both uneven development and a semistarvation level of existence of the masses are fundamental and inevitable conditions and premises of this mode of production. As long as capitalism remains what it is, surplus capital will be utilized not for the purpose of raising the standard of living of the masses in a given country, for this would mean a decline in profits for the capitalists, but for the purpose of increasing profits by exporting capital abroad to the backward countries. (In these backward countries profits are usually high, for capital is scarce, the price of land is relatively low, wages are low, raw materials are cheap. The possibility of exporting capital is created by the fact that a number of backward countries have already been drawn into world capitalist intercourse; main railways have either been or are being built there, the elementary conditions for industrial development have been created, etc. The necessity for exporting capital arises from the fact that in a few countries capitalism has become "overripe" and (owing to the backward stage of agriculture and the impoverished state of the masses) capital cannot find a field for "profitable" investment.)

Here are approximate figures showing the amount of capital invested abroad by the three principal countries:\*

# CAPITAL INVESTED ABROAD

(In billions of francs)

Year	Great Britain	France	Germany
1862 . . . . .	3.6	—	—
1872 . . . . .	15.0	10 (1869)	—
1882 . . . . .	22.0	15 (1880)	?
1893 . . . . .	42.0	20 (1890)	?
1902 . . . . .	62.0	27-37	12.5
1914 . . . . .	75-100.0	60	44.0

This table shows that the export of capital reached formidable dimensions only in the beginning of the twentieth century. Before the war the capital invested abroad by the three principal countries amounted to between 175,000,000,000 and 200,000,000,000 francs. At the modest rate of 5 per cent, the income from this sum should have reached from 8 to 10 billion francs a year. A solid basis for imperialist oppression and the exploitation of most

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\* Hobson, *Imperialism*, London 1902, p. 58; Riesser, *op. cit.*, pp. 395 and 404; P. Arndt in *Weltwirtschaftliches Archiv*, Bd. 7, 1916, S. 35; Neymarck in *Bulletin*; Hilferding, *Finance Capital*, p. 492; Lloyd George, Speech in the House of Commons, May 4, 1915, reported in the *Daily Telegraph*, May 5, 1915; B. Harms, *Probleme der Weltwirtschaft*, Jena 1912, S. 235 et seq.; Dr. Siegmund Schilder, *Entwicklungstendenzen der Weltwirtschaft (Trends of Development of World Economy—Tr.)*, Berlin 1912, Band 1, S. 150; George Paish, *Great Britain's Capital Investments, etc.*, in *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*, Vol. LXXIV, 1910-11, p. 167 et seq.; Georges Diouritch, *L'expansion des banques allemandes à l'étranger, ses rapports avec le développement économique de l'Allemagne (Expansion of German Banks Abroad in Connection with the Economic Development of Germany—Tr.)*, Paris 1909, p. 84.



of the countries and nations of the world, for the capitalist parasitism of a handful of wealthy states!

How is this capital invested abroad distributed among the various countries? *Where* is it invested? Only an approximate answer can be given to this question, but one sufficient to throw light on certain general relations and connections of modern imperialism.

APPROXIMATE DISTRIBUTION OF FOREIGN CAPITAL  
(ABOUT 1910)

	(In billions of marks)			
	Great Britain	France	Germany	Total
Europe . . . . .	4	23	18	45
America . . . . .	37	4	10	51
Asia, Africa and Australia	29	8	7	44
<i>Total . . . . .</i>	70	35	35	140

The principal spheres of investment of British capital are the British colonies, which are very large also in America (for example, Canada) not to mention Asia, etc. In this case, enormous exports of capital are bound up most closely with vast colonies, of the importance of which for imperialism we shall speak later. In the case of France the situation is different. French capital exports are invested mainly in Europe, primarily in Russia (at least ten billion francs). This is mainly *loan* capital, government loans and not investments in industrial undertakings. Unlike British, colonial imperialism, French imperialism might be termed usury imperialism. In the case of Germany, we have a third type; colonies are inconsiderable, and German capital invested abroad is divided most evenly between Europe and America.

The export of capital affects and greatly accelerates the development of capitalism in those countries to which it is exported. While, therefore, the export of capital may tend to a certain extent to arrest development in the capital exporting countries, it can only do so by expanding and deepening the further development of capitalism throughout the world.

The countries which export capital are nearly always able to obtain certain "advantages," the character of which throws light on the peculiarity of the epoch of finance capital and monopoly. The following passage, for instance, occurred in the Berlin review, *Die Bank*, for October 1913:

"A comedy worthy of the pen of Aristophanes is lately being played on the international capital market. Numerous foreign countries, from Spain to the Balkan states, from Russia to Argentina, Brazil and China, are openly or secretly coming into the big money market with demands, sometimes very persistent, for loans. The money market is not very bright at the moment and the political outlook is not promising. But not a single money market dares to refuse a foreign loan for fear that its neighbour may forestall it, consent to grant a loan and so secure some reciprocal service. In these international transactions the creditor nearly always manages to secure some extra benefit: a favourable clause in a commercial treaty, a coaling station, a contract to construct a harbour, a fat concession, or an order for guns."\*

Finance capital has created the epoch of monopolies, and monopolies introduce everywhere monopolist principles: the utilization of "connections" for profitable transactions takes the place of competition on the open market. The most usual thing is to stipulate that part of the loan that is granted shall be spent on purchases in the creditor

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\* *Die Bank*, 1913, 2, p. 1024.

country, particularly on orders for war materials, or for ships, etc. In the course of the last two decades (1890-1910), France has very often resorted to this method. The export of capital abroad thus becomes a means for encouraging the export of commodities. In this connection, transactions between particularly big firms assume a form which, as Schilder\* "mildly" puts it, "borders on corruption." Krupp in Germany, Schneider in France, Armstrong in England are instances of firms which have close connections with powerful banks and governments and cannot easily be "ignored" when a loan is being arranged.

France, when granting loans to Russia, "squeezed" her in concluding the commercial treaty of September 16, 1905, in which she stipulated for certain concessions to run till 1917. She did the same thing when the Franco-Japanese commercial treaty was concluded on August 19, 1911. The tariff war between Austria and Serbia, which lasted with a seven months' interval, from 1906 to 1911, was partly caused by competition between Austria and France for supplying Serbia with war materials. In January 1912, Paul Deschanel stated in the Chamber of Deputies that from 1908 to 1911 French firms had supplied war materials to Serbia to the value of 45,000,000 francs.

A report from the Austro-Hungarian Consul at Sao-Paulo (Brazil) states: "The construction of the Brazilian railways is being carried out chiefly by French, Belgian, British and German capital. In the financial operations connected with the construction of these railways the countries involved stipulate for orders for the necessary railway materials."

Thus finance capital, literally, one might say, spreads its net over all countries of the world. An important role

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\* Schilder, *op. cit.*, pp. 346, 350 and 371.

in this is played by banks founded in the colonies and by their branches. German imperialists look with envy at the "old" colonizing countries which have been particularly "successful" in providing for themselves in this respect. In 1904, Great Britain had 50 colonial banks with 2,279 branches (in 1910 there were 72 banks with 5,449 branches); France had 20 with 136 branches; Holland 16 with 68 branches; and Germany had "only" 13 with 70 branches.\* The American capitalists, in their turn, are jealous of the English and German: "In South America," they complained in 1915, "five German banks have forty branches and five English banks have seventy branches. . . . England and Germany have invested in Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay in the last twenty-five years approximately four thousand million dollars, and as a result enjoy together 46 per cent of the total trade of these three countries."\*\*

The capital exporting countries have divided the world among themselves in the figurative sense of the term. But finance capital has led to the *actual* division of the world.

## V. THE DIVISION OF THE WORLD AMONG CAPITALIST COMBINES

Monopolist capitalist combines, cartels, syndicates and trusts divide among themselves, first of all, the home market, seize more or less complete possession of the industry of a country. But under capitalism the home

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\* Riesser, *op. cit.*, 4th ed., p. 375; Diouritch, p. 283.

\*\* *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. LIX, May 1915, p. 301. In the same volume on p. 331, we read that the well-known statistician Paish, in the last issue of the financial magazine *The Statist*, estimated the amount of capital exported by England, Germany, France, Belgium and Holland at \$40,000,000,000, i.e., 200,000,000,000 francs.

market is inevitably bound up with the foreign market. Capitalism long ago created a world market. As the export of capital increased, and as the foreign and colonial connections and "spheres of influence" of the big monopolist combines expanded in all ways, things "naturally" gravitated towards an international agreement among these combines, and towards the formation of international cartels.

This is a new stage of world concentration of capital and production, incomparably higher than the preceding stages. Let us see how this supermonopoly develops.

The electrical industry is the most typical of the latest technical achievements, most typical of capitalism at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries. This industry has developed most in the two most advanced of the new capitalist countries, the United States and Germany. In Germany, the crisis of 1900 gave a particularly strong impetus to its concentration. During the crisis, the banks, which by this time had become fairly well merged with industry, enormously accelerated and intensified the ruin of relatively small firms and their absorption by the large ones. "The banks," writes Jeidels, "in refusing a helping hand to the very companies which are in greatest need of capital bring on first a frenzied boom and then the hopeless failure of the companies which have not been attached to them closely enough."\*

As a result, after 1900, concentration in Germany progressed with giant strides. Up to 1900 there had been eight or seven "groups" in the electrical industry. Each consisted of several companies (altogether there were 28) and each was backed by from 2 to 11 banks. Between 1908 and 1912 all these groups were merged into two, or one. The diagram below shows the process:

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\* Jeidels, *op. cit.*, p. 232.

## GROUPS IN THE ELECTRICAL INDUSTRY

Prior to 1900:	Felten & Guillaume	Lah- meyer	Union A.E.G.	Siemens & Halske	Schuckert & Co.	Berg- mann	Kummer
	Felten & Lahmeyer		A.E.G. (Gen. El. Co.)	Siemens & Halske- Schuckert		Berg- mann	Failed in 1900
By 1912:	A.E.G. (General Electric Co.)			Siemens & Halske- Schuckert			
(In close "cooperation" since 1908)							

(The famous A.E.G. (General Electric Company), which grew up in this way, controls 175 to 200 companies (through the "holding" system), and a total capital of approximately 1,500,000,000 marks. Of direct agencies abroad alone, it has thirty-four, of which twelve are joint-stock companies, in more than ten countries. As early as 1904 the amount of capital invested abroad by the German electrical industry was estimated at 233,000,000 marks. Of this sum, 62,000,000 were invested in Russia. Needless to say, the A.E.G. is a huge "combine"—its manufacturing companies alone number no less than sixteen—producing the most diverse articles, from cables and insulators to motor cars and flying machines.)

But concentration in Europe was also a component part of the process of concentration in America, which developed in the following way:

General Electric Company		
United States:	Thomson-Houston Co. establishes a firm in Europe	Edison Co. establishes in Europe the French Edison Co. which transfers its patents to the Ger- man firm
Germany:	Union Electric Co.	General Electric Co. (A.E.G.)
General Electric Co. (A. E. G.)		

Thus, *two* electrical "Great Powers" were formed: "there are no other electric companies in the world *completely* independent of them," wrote Heinig in his article "The Path of the Electric Trust." An idea, although far from complete, of the turnover and the size of the enterprises of the two "trusts" can be obtained from the following figures:

	Turnover (Mill. marks)	No. of employees	Net profits (Mill. marks)
America: General Electric Co. (G.E.C.) .			
1907:	252	28,000	35.4
1910:	298	32,000	45.6
Germany: General Electric Co. (A. E. G.) . .			
1907:	216	30,700	14.5
1911:	362	60,800	21.7

Well, in 1907, the German and American trusts concluded an agreement by which they divided the world between themselves. Competition between them ceased. The American General Electric Company (G.E.C.) "got" the United States and Canada. The German General Electric Company (A.E.G.) "got" Germany, Austria, Russia, Holland, Denmark, Switzerland, Turkey and the Balkans. Special agreements, naturally secret, were concluded regarding the penetration of "daughter companies" into new branches of industry, into "new" countries formally not yet allotted. The two trusts were to exchange inventions and experiments.\*

The difficulty of competing against this trust, which is practically world-wide, controls a capital of several billion, and has its "branches," agencies, representatives, connections, etc., in every corner of the world, is self-evident. But the division of the world between two powerful trusts does not preclude *redivision* if the relation of

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\*\* Riesser, *op. cit.*; Diouritch, *op. cit.*, p. 239; Kurt Heinig, *op. cit.*

forces changes as a result of uneven development, war, bankruptcy, etc.

An instructive example of attempts at such a redivision, of the struggle for redivision, is provided by the oil industry.

"The world oil market," wrote Jeidels in 1905, "is even today still divided between two great financial groups—Rockefeller's American Standard Oil Co., and Rothschild and Nobel, the controlling interests of the Russian oil fields in Baku. The two groups are closely connected. But for several years five enemies have been threatening their monopoly":\* 1) The exhaustion of the American oil fields; 2) the competition of the firm of Mantashev of Baku; 3) the Austrian oil fields; 4) the Rumanian oil fields; 5) the overseas oil fields, particularly in the Dutch colonies (the extremely rich firms, Samuel, and Shell, also connected with British capital). The three last groups are connected with the big German banks, headed by the huge Deutsche Bank. These banks independently and systematically developed the oil industry in Rumania, for example, in order to have a foothold of their "own." In 1907, the foreign capital invested in the Rumanian oil industry was estimated at 185,000,000 francs, of which 74,000,000 was German capital.\*\*

A struggle began for the "division of the world," as, in fact, it is called in economic literature. On one side, the Rockefeller "oil trust," wishing to capture *everything*, formed a "daughter company" *right in* Holland, and bought up oil fields in the Dutch Indies, in order to strike at its principal enemy, the Anglo-Dutch Shell trust. On the other side, the Deutsche Bank and the other German banks aimed at "retaining" Rumania "for themselves" and at uniting it with Russia against Rockefeller. The latter pos-

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\* Jeidels, *op. cit.*, p. 193.

\*\* Diouritch, *op. cit.*, p. 245.



sessed far more capital and an excellent system of oil transportation and distribution. The struggle had to end, and did end in 1907, with the utter defeat of the Deutsche Bank, which was confronted with the alternative: either to liquidate its "oil interests" and lose millions, or submit. It chose to submit, and concluded a very disadvantageous agreement with the "oil trust." The Deutsche Bank agreed "not to attempt anything which might injure American interests." Provision was made, however, for the annulment of the agreement in the event of Germany establishing a state oil monopoly.

Then the "comedy of oil" began. One of the German finance kings, von Gwinner, a director of the Deutsche Bank, through his private secretary, Stauss, launched a campaign for a state oil monopoly. The gigantic machine of the huge German bank and all its wide "connections" were set in motion. The press bubbled over with "patriotic" indignation against the "yoke" of the American trust, and, on March 15, 1911, the Reichstag by an almost unanimous vote, adopted a motion asking the government to introduce a bill for the establishment of an oil monopoly. The government seized upon this "popular" idea, and the game of the Deutsche Bank, which hoped to cheat its American partner and improve its business by a state monopoly, appeared to have been won. The German oil magnates already saw visions of enormous profits, which would not be less than those of the Russian sugar refiners. . . . But, firstly, the big German banks quarrelled among themselves over the division of the spoils. The Disconto-Gesellschaft exposed the covetous aims of the Deutsche Bank; secondly, the government took fright at the prospect of a struggle with Rockefeller, for it was very doubtful whether Germany could be sure of obtaining oil from other sources (the Rumanian output was small); thirdly, just at that time the 1913 credits of a billion marks were voted for Germany's war preparations.

The oil monopoly project was postponed. The Rockefeller "oil trust" came out of the struggle, for the time being, victorious.

The Berlin review, *Die Bank*, wrote in this connection that Germany could fight the oil trust only by establishing an electricity monopoly and by converting water power into cheap electricity. "But," the author added, "the electricity monopoly will come when the producers need it, that is to say, when the next great crash in the electrical industry will be standing at the door, and when the gigantic, expensive electric stations which are now being put up at great cost everywhere by private electrical 'concerns,' which are already obtaining partial monopolies from towns, from states, etc., can no longer work at a profit. Water power will then have to be used. But it will be impossible to convert it into cheap electricity at state expense; it will also have to be handed over to a 'private monopoly controlled by the state,' because private industry has already concluded a number of contracts and has stipulated for heavy compensation.... So it was with the nitrate monopoly, so it is with the oil monopoly; so it will be with the electric power monopoly. It is time our state socialists, who allow themselves to be blinded by a beautiful principle, understood, at last, that in Germany the monopolies have never pursued the aim, nor have they had the result, of benefiting the consumer, or even of handing over to the state part of the promoter's profits; they have served only to facilitate at the expense of the state, the recovery of private industries which were on the verge of bankruptcy."\*

Such are the valuable admissions which the German bourgeois economists are forced to make. We see plainly here how private and state monopolies are interwoven in the age of finance capital; how both are but separate

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\* *Die Bank*, 1912, 1, p. 1036; 1912, 2, p. 629; 1913, 1, p. 388.

links in the imperialist struggle between the big monopolists for the division of the world.

In mercantile shipping, the tremendous development of concentration has ended also in the division of the world. In Germany two powerful companies have come to the front: the Hamburg-Amerika and the Norddeutscher Lloyd, each having a capital of 200,000,000 marks (in stocks and bonds) and possessing shipping tonnage to the value of 185 to 189 million marks. On the other side, in America, on January 1, 1903, the so-called Morgan trust, the International Mercantile Marine Co., was formed which united nine American and British steamship companies, and which possessed a capital of 120,000,000 dollars (480,000,000 marks). As early as 1903, the German giants and this American-British trust concluded an agreement to divide the world in connection with the division of profits. The German companies undertook not to compete in the Anglo-American traffic. Which ports were to be "allotted" to each was precisely stipulated; a joint committee of control was set up, etc. This agreement was concluded for twenty years, with the prudent provision for its annulment in the event of war.\*

Extremely instructive also is the story of the formation of the International Rail Cartel. The first attempt of the British, Belgian and German rail manufacturers to form such a cartel was made as early as 1884, during a severe industrial depression. The manufacturers agreed not to compete with one another in the home markets of the countries involved, and they divided the foreign markets in the following quotas: Great Britain 66 per cent; Germany 27 per cent; Belgium 7 per cent. India was reserved entirely for Great Britain. Joint war was declared against a British firm which remained outside the cartel, the cost of which was met by a percentage levy on all sales. But in 1886 the cartel collapsed when two British firms

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\* Riesser, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

retired from it. It is characteristic that agreement could not be achieved during subsequent boom periods.

At the beginning of 1904, the German steel syndicate was formed. In November 1904, the International Rail Cartel was revived, with the following quotas: England 53.5 per cent; Germany 28.83 per cent; Belgium 17.67 per cent. France came in later and received 4.8 per cent, 5.8 per cent and 6.4 per cent in the first, second and third years respectively, over and above the 100 per cent limit, i.e., out of a total of 104.8 per cent, etc. In 1905, the United States Steel Corporation entered the cartel; then Austria and Spain. "At the present time," wrote Vogelstein in 1910, "the division of the world is completed, and the big consumers, primarily the state railways—since the world has been parcelled out without consideration for their interests—can now dwell like the poet in the heaven of Jupiter."\*

We will mention also the International Zinc Syndicate which was established in 1909 and which precisely apportioned output among five groups of factories: German, Belgian, French, Spanish and British; and also the International Dynamite Trust, which, Liefmann says, is "quite a modern, close alliance of all the German explosives manufacturers who, with the French and American dynamite manufacturers, organized in a similar manner, have divided the whole world among themselves, so to speak."\*\*

Liefmann calculated that in 1897 there were altogether about forty international cartels in which Germany had a share, while in 1910 there were about a hundred.

Certain bourgeois writers (whom K. Kautsky, who has completely abandoned the Marxist position he held, for example, in 1909, has now joined) have expressed the opin-

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\* Vogelstein, *Organisationsformen*, p. 100.

\*\* Liefmann, *Kartelle und Trusts*, 2. A., p. 161.

ion that international cartels, being one of the most striking expressions of the internationalization of capital, give the hope of peace among nations under capitalism. Theoretically, this opinion is absolutely absurd, while in practice it is sophistry and a dishonest defence of the worst opportunism. International cartels show to what point capitalist monopolies have developed, and *the object* of the struggle between the various capitalist combines. This last circumstance is the most important; it alone shows us the historico-economic meaning of what is taking place; for the *forms* of the struggle may and do constantly change in accordance with varying, relatively particular and temporary causes, but the *substance* of the struggle, its class content, positively *cannot* change while classes exist. Naturally, it is in the interests of, for example, the German bourgeoisie, to whose side Kautsky has in effect gone over in his theoretical arguments (we will deal with this later), to obscure the *substance* of the present economic struggle (the division of the world) and to emphasize now this and now another *form* of the struggle. Kautsky makes the same mistake. Of course, we have in mind not only the German bourgeoisie, but the bourgeoisie all over the world. The capitalists divide the world, not out of any particular malice, but because the degree of concentration which has been reached forces them to adopt this method in order to obtain profits. And they divide it "in proportion to capital," "in proportion to strength," because there cannot be any other method of division under commodity production and capitalism. But strength varies with the degree of economic and political development. In order to understand what is taking place, it is necessary to know what questions are settled by the changes in strength. The question as to whether these changes are "purely" economic or *non-economic* (e.g., military) is a secondary one, which cannot in the least affect the fundamental views on the latest epoch of capitalism. To substitute the question of the

form of the struggle and agreements (today peaceful, tomorrow warlike, the next day warlike again) for the question of the *substance* of the struggle and agreements between capitalist combines is to sink to the role of a sophist.

(The epoch of the latest stage of capitalism shows us that certain relations between capitalist combines grow up, *based on* the economic division of the world; while parallel and in connection with it, certain relations grow up between political combines, between states, on the basis of the territorial division of the world, of the struggle for colonies, of the "struggle for economic territory.")

## VI. THE DIVISION OF THE WORLD AMONG THE GREAT POWERS

In his book, on "the territorial development of the European colonies," A. Supan,\* the geographer, gives the following brief summary of this development at the end of the nineteenth century:

### PERCENTAGE OF TERRITORY BELONGING TO THE EUROPEAN COLONIAL POWERS (INCLUDING THE UNITED STATES)

	1876	1900	Increase or decrease
In Africa . . . .	10.8%	90.4%	+ 79.6%
" Polynesia . . . .	56.8%	98.9%	+ 42.1%
" Asia . . . .	51.5%	56.6%	+ 5.1%
" Australia . . . .	100.0%	100.0%	—
" America . . . .	27.5%	27.2%	— 0.3%

\* A Supan, *Die territoriale Entwicklung der europäischen Kolonien*, 1906, p. 254.

"The characteristic feature of this period," he concludes, "is, therefore, the division of Africa and Polynesia." As there are no unoccupied territories—that is, territories that do not belong to any state—in Asia and America, it is necessary to amplify Supan's conclusion and say that the characteristic feature of the period under review is the final partition of the globe—final, not in the sense that a *repartition* is impossible; on the contrary, repartitions are possible and inevitable—but in the sense that the colonial policy of the capitalist countries has *completed* the seizure of the unoccupied territories on our planet. For the first time the world is completely divided up, so that in the future *only* redivision is possible, i.e., territories can only pass from one "owner" to another, instead of passing as ownerless territory to an "owner.")

Hence, we are passing through a peculiar epoch of world colonial policy, which is most closely connected with the "latest stage in the development of capitalism," with finance capital. For this reason, it is essential first of all to deal in greater detail with the facts, in order to ascertain as exactly as possible what distinguishes this epoch from those preceding it, and what the present situation is. In the first place, two questions of fact arise here: is an intensification of colonial policy, a sharpening of the struggle for colonies, observed precisely in this epoch of finance capital? And how, in this respect, is the world divided at the present time?

The American writer, Morris, in his book on the history of colonization,\* has made an attempt to sum up the data on the colonial possessions of Great Britain, France and Germany during different periods of the nineteenth century. The following is a brief summary of the results he has obtained:

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\* Henry C. Morris, *The History of Colonization*, New York 1900, Vol. II, p. 88; Vol. I, p. 419; Vol. II, p. 304.

## COLONIAL POSSESSIONS

Year	Great Britain		France		Germany	
	Area (mill. sq.m.)	Pop. (mill.)	Area (mill. sq.m.)	Pop. (mill.)	Area (mill. sq.m.)	Pop. (mill.)
1815-30 . . . .	?	126.4	0.02	0.5	—	—
1860 . . . . .	2.5	145.1	0.2	3.4	—	—
1880 . . . . .	7.7	267.9	0.7	7.5	—	—
1890 . . . . .	9.3	309.0	3.7	56.4	1.0	14.7

For Great Britain, the period of the enormous expansion of colonial conquests is that between 1860 and 1880, and it was also very considerable in the last twenty years of the nineteenth century. For France and Germany this period falls precisely in these twenty years. We saw above that the development of premonopolist-capitalism, of capitalism in which free competition was predominant, reached its limit in the 1860's and 1870's. We now see that it is *precisely after that period* that the tremendous "boom" in colonial conquests begins, and that the struggle for the territorial division of the world becomes extraordinarily keen. It is beyond doubt, therefore, that capitalism's transition to the stage of monopoly capitalism, to finance capital, is *connected* with the intensification of the struggle for the partition of the world.

Hobson, in his work on imperialism, marks the years 1884-1900 as the epoch of intensified "expansion" of the chief European states. According to his estimate, Great Britain during these years acquired 3,700,000 square miles of territory with a population of 57,000,000; France acquired 3,600,000 square miles with a population of 36,500,000; Germany 1,000,000 square miles with a population of 14,700,000; Belgium 900,000 square miles with 30,000,000 inhabitants; Portugal 800,000 square miles with 9,000,000 inhabitants. The pursuit of colonies by all the



capitalist states at the end of the nineteenth century and particularly since the 1880's is a commonly known fact in the history of diplomacy and of foreign politics.

In, the most flourishing period of free competition in Great Britain, i.e., between 1840 and 1860, the leading British bourgeois politicians were *opposed* to colonial policy and were of the opinion that the liberation of the colonies, their complete separation from Britain was inevitable and desirable. M. Beer, in an article, "Modern British Imperialism,"\* published in 1898, shows that in 1852, Disraeli, a statesman who was generally inclined towards imperialism, declared: "The colonies are millstones round our necks." But at the end of the nineteenth century the heroes of the hour in England were Cecil Rhodes and Joseph Chamberlain, who openly advocated imperialism and applied the imperialist policy in the most cynical manner!

It is not without interest to observe that already at that time these leading British bourgeois politicians saw the connection between what might be called the purely economic and the politico-social roots of modern imperialism. Chamberlain advocated imperialism as a "true, wise and economical policy," and pointed particularly to the German, American and Belgian competition which Great Britain was encountering in the world market. Salvation lies in monopolies, said the capitalists as they formed cartels, syndicates and trusts. Salvation lies in monopolies, echoed the political leaders of the bourgeoisie, hastening to appropriate the parts of the world not yet shared out. And Cecil Rhodes, we are informed by his intimate friend, the journalist Stead, expressed his imperialist views to him in 1895 in the following terms: "I was in the East End of London" (working-class quarter) "yesterday and attended a meeting of the unemployed. I listened to the wild speeches, which were just a cry for 'bread,' 'bread!' and on

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\* *Die Neue Zeit*, XVI, I, 1898, S. 302.

my way home I pondered over the scene and I became more than ever convinced of the importance of imperialism.... My cherished idea is a solution for the social problem, i.e., in order to save the 40,000,000 inhabitants of the United Kingdom from a bloody civil war, we colonial statesmen must acquire new lands to settle the surplus population, to provide new markets for the goods produced in the factories and mines. The Empire, as I have always said, is a bread and butter question. If you want to avoid civil war, you must become imperialists.”\*

This is what Cecil Rhodes, millionaire, a king of finance, the man who was mainly responsible for the Anglo-Boer War, said in 1895. True, his defence of imperialism is crude and cynical, but in substance it does not differ from the “theory” advocated by Messrs. Maslov, Südekum, Potressov, David and the founder of Russian Marxism, and others. Cecil Rhodes was a somewhat more honest social-chauvinist....

To present as precise a picture as possible of the territorial division of the world and of the changes which have occurred during the last decades in this respect, we will utilize the data furnished by Supan in the work already quoted on the colonial possessions of all the powers of the world. Supan takes the years 1876 and 1900; we will take the year 1876—a year very aptly selected, for it is precisely by that time that the premonopolist stage of development of West-European capitalism can be said to have been completed, in the main—and the year 1914, and instead of Supan’s figures we will quote the more recent statistics of Hübner’s *Geographical and Statistical Tables*. Supan gives figures only for colonies; we think it useful, in order to present a complete picture of the division of the world, to add brief figures on non-colonial and semicolonial countries, in which category we place

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\* *Ibid.*, p. 304.

Persia, China and Turkey: the first of these countries is already almost completely a colony, the second and third are becoming such.

We thus get the following summary:

### COLONIAL POSSESSIONS OF THE GREAT POWERS

(Million square kilometres and million inhabitants)

	Colonies				Metropolitan countries		Total	
	1876		1914		1914		1914	
	Area	Pop.	Area	Pop.	Area	Pop.	Area	Pop.
Great Britain . .	22.5	251.9	33.5	393.5	0.3	46.5	33.8	440.0
Russia . .	17.0	15.9	17.4	33.2	5.4	136.2	22.8	169.4
France . .	0.9	6.0	10.6	55.5	0.5	39.6	11.1	95.1
Germany . .	—	—	2.9	12.3	0.5	64.9	3.4	77.2
U.S.A. . .	—	—	0.3	9.7	9.4	97.0	9.7	106.7
Japan . .	—	—	0.3	19.2	0.4	53.0	0.7	72.2
<i>Total for 6 Great Powers</i>	40.4	273.8	65.0	523.4	16.5	437.2	81.5	960.6
Colonies of other powers (Belgium, Holland, etc.) .							9.9	45.3
Semicolonial countries (Persia, China, Turkey) . . .							14.5	361.2
Other countries . . . . .							28.0	289.9
<i>Total for whole world . . . . .</i>							133.9	1,657.0

We clearly see from these figures how "complete" was the partition of the world on the border line between the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. After 1876 colonial possessions increase to enormous dimensions, more than fifty per cent, from 40,000,000 to 65,000,000 square kilometres in area for the six biggest powers; the increase amounts to 25,000,000 square kilometres, fifty per cent larger than the area of the metropolitan countries (16,500,000 square kilometres). In 1876 three powers had no colonies, and a fourth, France, had scarcely any. By 1914 these four powers had acquired colonies of an area

of 14,100,000 square kilometres, i.e., about fifty per cent larger than that of Europe, with a population of nearly 100,000,000. The unevenness in the rate of expansion of colonial possessions is very great. If, for instance, we compare France, Germany and Japan, which do not differ very much in area and population, we will see that the first has acquired almost three times as much colonial territory as the other two combined. In regard to finance capital, France, at the beginning of the period we are considering, was also, perhaps, several times richer than Germany and Japan put together. In addition to, and on the basis of, purely economic conditions, geographical and other conditions also affect the dimensions of colonial possessions. However strong the process of levelling the world, of levelling the economic and living conditions in different countries, may have been in the past decades as a result of the pressure of large-scale industry, exchange and finance capital, considerable differences still remain; and among the six powers mentioned we see, firstly, young capitalist countries (America, Germany, Japan) whose progress has been extraordinarily rapid; secondly, countries with an old capitalist development (France and Great Britain), whose progress lately has been much slower than that of the previously mentioned countries, and thirdly, a country which is economically most backward (Russia), where modern capitalist imperialism is enmeshed, so to speak, in a particularly close network of precapitalist relations.

Alongside the colonial possessions of the Great Powers, we have placed the small colonies of the small states, which are, so to speak, the next objects of a possible and probable "redivision" of colonies. Most of these small states are able to retain their colonies only because of the conflicting interests, friction, etc., among the big powers, which prevent them from coming to an agreement in regard to the division of the spoils. The "semicolonial" states

provide an example of the transitional forms which are to be found in all spheres of nature and society. Finance capital is such a great, it may be said, such a decisive force in all economic and in all international relations, that it is capable of subjecting, and actually does subject to itself even states enjoying the fullest political independence; we shall shortly see examples of this. Of course, finance capital finds most "convenient," and is able to extract the greatest profit from *such* a subjection as involves the loss of the political independence of the subjected countries and peoples. In this connection, the semicolonial countries provide a typical example of the "middle stage." It is natural that the struggle for these semidependent countries should have become particularly bitter in the epoch of finance capital, when the rest of the world has already been divided up.

Colonial policy and imperialism existed before this latest stage of capitalism, and even before capitalism. Rome, founded on slavery, pursued a colonial policy and practised imperialism. But "general" disquisitions on imperialism, which ignore, or put into the background, the fundamental difference between social-economic systems, inevitably degenerate into the most vapid banality or bragging, like the comparison: "Greater Rome and Greater Britain."\* Even the capitalist colonial policy of *previous* stages of capitalism is essentially different from the colonial policy of finance capital.

The principal feature of the latest stage of capitalism is the domination of monopolist combines of the big capitalists. These monopolies are most firmly established when *all* the sources of raw materials are captured by one group, and we have seen with what zeal the international capitalist combines exert every effort to make it impossible for their rivals to compete with them by buying up, for

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\* C. P. Lucas, *Greater Rome and Greater Britain*, Oxford 1912, or the Earl of Cromer's *Ancient and Modern Imperialism*, London 1910

example, iron ore fields, oil fields, etc. Colonial possession alone gives the monopolies complete guarantee against all contingencies in the struggle with competitors, including the contingency that the latter will defend themselves by means of a law establishing a state monopoly. The more capitalism is developed, the more strongly the shortage of raw materials is felt, the more intense the competition and the hunt for sources of raw materials throughout the whole world, the more desperate is the struggle for the acquisition of colonies.

"It may be asserted," writes Schilder, "although it may sound paradoxical to some, that in the more or less discernible future the growth of the urban and industrial population is more likely to be hindered by a shortage of raw materials for industry than by a shortage of food." For example, there is a growing shortage of timber—the price of which is steadily rising—of leather, and of raw materials for the textile industry. "Associations of manufacturers are making efforts to create an equilibrium between agriculture and industry in the whole of world economy; as an example of this we might mention the International Federation of Cotton Spinners' Associations in several of the most important industrial countries, founded in 1904, and the European Federation of Flax Spinners' Associations, founded on the same model in 1910."\*

The bourgeois reformists, and among them particularly the present-day adherents of Kautsky, of course, try to belittle the importance of facts of this kind by arguing that it "would be possible" to obtain raw materials in the open market without a "costly and dangerous" colonial policy; and that it "would be possible" to increase the supply of raw materials to an enormous extent "simply" by improving conditions in agriculture in general. But such

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\* Schilder, *op. cit.*, pp. 38-42.

arguments become an apology for imperialism, an attempt to embellish it, because they ignore the principal feature of the latest stage of capitalism: monopolies. Free markets are becoming more and more a thing of the past; monopolist syndicates and trusts are restricting them more and more every day, and "simply" improving conditions in agriculture means improving the conditions of the masses, raising wages and reducing profits. Where, except in the imagination of sentimental reformists, are there any trusts capable of interesting themselves in the condition of the masses instead of the conquest of colonies?

Finance capital is interested not only in the already discovered sources of raw materials but also in potential sources, because present-day technical development is extremely rapid, and land which is useless today may be made fertile tomorrow if new methods are applied (to devise these new methods a big bank can equip a special expedition of engineers, agricultural experts, etc.), and if large amounts of capital are invested. This also applies to prospecting for minerals, to new methods of working up and utilizing raw materials, etc., etc. Hence, the inevitable striving of finance capital to enlarge its economic territory and even its territory in general. In the same way that the trusts capitalize their property at two or three times its value, taking into account its "potential" (and not present) profits, and the further results of monopoly, so finance capital strives in general to seize the largest possible amount of land of all kinds in all places, and by every means, taking into account potential sources of raw materials and fearing to be left behind in the fierce struggle for the last scraps of undivided territory, or for the repartition of those that have been already divided.

The British capitalists are exerting every effort to develop cotton growing in *their* colony, Egypt (in 1904, out of 2,300,000 hectares of land under cultivation, 600,000, or more than one-fourth, were devoted to cotton growing);

the Russians are doing the same in *their* colony, Turkestan, because in this way they will be in a better position to defeat their foreign competitors, to monopolize the sources of raw materials and form a more economical and profitable textile trust in which *all* the processes of cotton production and manufacturing will be "combined" and concentrated in the hands of one set of owners.

The interests pursued in exporting capital also give an impetus to the conquest of colonies, for in the colonial market it is easier to employ monopolist methods (and sometimes they are the only methods that can be employed) to eliminate competition, to make sure of contracts, to secure the necessary "connections," etc.

The non-economic superstructure which grows up on the basis of finance capital, its politics and its ideology, stimulates the striving for colonial conquest. "Finance capital does not want liberty, it wants domination," as Hilferding very truly says. And a French bourgeois writer, developing and supplementing, as it were, the ideas of Cecil Rhodes quoted above,\* writes that social causes should be added to the economic causes of modern colonial policy: "owing to the growing complexities of life and the difficulties which weigh not only on the masses of the workers, but also on the middle classes, 'Impatience, irritation and hatred are accumulating in all the countries of the old civilization and are becoming a menace to public order; the energy which is being hurled out of the definite class channel must be given employment abroad in order to avert an explosion at home.'""\*\*

Since we are speaking of colonial policy in the epoch of capitalist imperialism, it must be observed that finance capital and its corresponding foreign policy, which reduces

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\* See this volume, pp. 513-14.—Ed.

\*\* Wahl, *La France aux colonies* (*France in the Colonies—Tr.*), quoted by Henri Russier, *Le partage de l'Océanie* (*The Partition of Oceania—Tr.*), Paris 1905, p. 165.



itself to the struggle of the Great Powers for the economic and political division of the world, give rise to a number of *transitional* forms of state dependence. Typical of this epoch is not only the two main groups of countries: those owning colonies, and colonies, but also the diverse forms of dependent countries which, officially, are politically independent, but in fact, are enmeshed in the net of financial and diplomatic dependence. We have already referred to one form of dependence—the semicolony. An example of another is provided by Argentina.

"South America, and especially Argentina," writes Schulze-Gaevernitz in his work on British imperialism, "is so dependent financially on London that it ought to be described as almost a British commercial colony."\* Basing himself on the report of the Austro-Hungarian consul at Buenos Aires for 1909, Schilder estimates the amount of British capital invested in Argentina at 8,750,000,000 francs. It is not difficult to imagine what strong connections British finance capital (and its faithful "friend," diplomacy) thereby acquires with the Argentine bourgeoisie, with the circles that control the whole of that country's economic and political life.

A somewhat different form of financial and diplomatic dependence, accompanied by political independence, is presented by Portugal. Portugal is an independent sovereign state, but actually, for more than two hundred years, since the war of the Spanish Succession (1701-14), it has been a British protectorate. Great Britain has protected Portugal and her colonies in order to fortify her own positions in the fight against her rivals, Spain and France. In return

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\* Schulze-Gaevernitz, *Britischer Imperialismus und englischer Freihandel zu Beginn des 20-ten Jahrhunderts* (*British Imperialism and English Free Trade at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century—Tr.*), Leipzig 1906, p. 318. Sartorius v. Waltershausen says the same in *Das volkswirtschaftliche System der Kapitalanlage im Auslande* (*The National Economic System of Capital Investments Abroad—Tr.*), Berlin 1907, p. 46.

Great Britain has received commercial privileges, preferential conditions for importing goods and especially capital into Portugal and the Portuguese colonies, the right to use the ports and islands of Portugal, her telegraph cables, etc.\* Relations of this kind have always existed between big and little states, but in the epoch of capitalist imperialism they become a general system, they form part of the sum total of "divide the world" relations, become links in the chain of operations of world finance capital.

In order to finish with the question of the division of the world, we must make the following additional observation. This question was raised quite openly and definitely not only in American literature after the Spanish-American War, and in English literature after the Anglo-Boer War, at the very end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth; not only has German literature, which has "most jealously" watched "British imperialism," systematically given its appraisal of this fact; it has also been raised in French bourgeois literature in terms as wide and definite as they can be made from the bourgeois point of view. We will quote Driault, the historian, who, in his book, *Political and Social Problems at the End of the Nineteenth Century*, in the chapter "The Great Powers and the Division of the World," wrote the following: "During the past few years, all the free territory of the globe, with the exception of China, has been occupied by the powers of Europe and North America. Several conflicts and displacements of influence have already occurred over this matter, which foreshadow more terrible upheavals in the near future. For it is necessary to make haste. The nations which have not yet made provision for themselves run the risk of never receiving their share and never participating in the tremendous ex-

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\* Schilder, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 160-61.

ploitation of the globe which will be one of the most essential features of the next century" (i.e., the twentieth). "That is why all Europe and America have lately been afflicted with the fever of colonial expansion, of 'imperialism,' that most noteworthy feature of the end of the nineteenth century." And the author added: "In this partition of the world, in this furious hunt for the treasures and the big markets of the globe, the relative power of the empires founded in this nineteenth century is totally out of proportion to the place occupied in Europe by the nations which founded them. The dominant powers in Europe, the arbiters of her destiny, are *not* equally preponderant in the whole world. And, as colonial power, the hope of controlling as yet unassessed wealth, will evidently react upon the relative strength of the European powers, the colonial question—'imperialism,' if you will—which has already modified the political conditions of Europe itself, will modify them more and more."\*)

## VII. IMPERIALISM, AS A SPECIAL STAGE OF CAPITALISM

We must now try to sum up, put together, what has been said above on the subject of imperialism. Imperialism emerged as the development and direct continuation of the fundamental characteristics of capitalism in general. But capitalism only became capitalist imperialism at a definite and very high stage of its development, when certain of its fundamental characteristics began to change into their opposites, when the features of the epoch of transition from capitalism to a higher social and economic system had taken shape and revealed themselves all along the line. Economically, the main thing in this process is the displace-

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\* J. E. Driault, *Problèmes politiques et sociaux*, Paris 1907, p. 299.

ment of capitalist free competition by capitalist monopoly. Free competition is the fundamental characteristic of capitalism, and of commodity production generally; monopoly is the exact opposite of free competition, but we have seen the latter being transformed into monopoly before our eyes, creating large-scale industry and forcing out small industry, replacing large-scale by still larger-scale industry, and carrying concentration of production and capital to the point where out of it has grown and is growing monopoly: cartels, syndicates and trusts, and merging with them, the capital of a dozen or so banks, which manipulate thousands of millions. At the same time the monopolies, which have grown out of free competition, do not eliminate the latter, but exist over it and alongside of it, and thereby give rise to a number of very acute, intense antagonisms, frictions and conflicts. Monopoly is the transition from capitalism to a higher system.

¶ [If it were necessary to give the briefest possible definition of imperialism we should have to say that imperialism is the monopoly stage of capitalism. Such a definition would include what is most important, for, on the one hand, finance capital is the bank capital of a few very big monopolist banks, merged with the capital of the monopolist combines of industrialists; and, on the other hand, the division of the world is the transition from a colonial policy which has extended without hindrance to territories unseized by any capitalist power, to a colonial policy of monopolistic possession of the territory of the world which has been completely divided up.]

But very brief definitions, although convenient, for they sum up the main points, are nevertheless inadequate, since very important features of the phenomenon that has to be defined have to be especially deduced. And so, without forgetting the conditional and relative value of all definitions in general, which can never embrace all the concatenations of a phenomenon in its complete development, we must

give a definition of imperialism that will include the following five of its basic features: 1) the concentration of production and capital has developed to such a high stage that it has created monopolies which play a decisive role in economic life; 2) the merging of bank capital with industrial capital, and the creation, on the basis of this "finance capital," of a financial oligarchy; 3) the export of capital as distinguished from the export of commodities acquires exceptional importance; 4) the formation of international monopolist capitalist combines which share the world among themselves, and 5) the territorial division of the whole world among the biggest capitalist powers is completed. Imperialism is capitalism in that stage of development in which the dominance of monopolies and finance capital has established itself; in which the export of capital has acquired pronounced importance; in which the division of the world among the international trusts has begun; in which the division of all territories of the globe among the biggest capitalist powers has been completed.

We shall see later that imperialism can and must be defined differently if we bear in mind, not only the basic, purely economic concepts—to which the above definition is limited—but also the historical place of this stage of capitalism in relation to capitalism in general, or the relation between imperialism and the two main trends in the working-class movement. The point to be noted just now is that imperialism, as interpreted above, undoubtedly represents a special stage in the development of capitalism. To enable the reader to obtain the most well-grounded idea of imperialism possible, we deliberately tried to quote as largely as possible *bourgeois* economists who are obliged to admit the particularly incontrovertible facts concerning the latest stage of capitalist economy. With the same object in view, we have quoted detailed statistics which enable one to see to what degree bank capital, etc., has grown, in what precisely the transformation of quantity into quality,

of developed capitalism into imperialism, was expressed. Needless to say, of course, all boundaries in nature and in society are conditional and changeable, that it would be absurd to argue, for example, about the particular year or decade in which imperialism "definitely" became established.

In the matter of defining imperialism, however, we have to enter into controversy, primarily, with K. Kautsky, the principal Marxian theoretician of the epoch of the so-called Second International—that is, of the twenty-five years between 1889 and 1914. The fundamental ideas expressed in our definition of imperialism were very resolutely attacked by Kautsky in 1915, and even in November 1914, when he said that imperialism must not be regarded as a "phase" or stage of economy, but as a policy, a definite policy "preferred" by finance capital; that imperialism must not be "identified" with "present-day capitalism"; that if imperialism is to be understood to mean "all the phenomena of present-day capitalism"—cartels, protection, the domination of the financiers, and colonial policy—then the question as to whether imperialism is necessary to capitalism becomes reduced to the "flattest tautology," because, in that case, "imperialism is naturally a vital necessity for capitalism," and so on. The best way to present Kautsky's idea is to quote his own definition of imperialism, which is diametrically opposed to the substance of the ideas which we have set forth (for the objections coming from the camp of the German Marxists, who have been advocating similar ideas for many years already, have been long known to Kautsky as the objections of a definite trend in Marxism).

Kautsky's definition is as follows:

"Imperialism is a product of highly developed industrial capitalism. It consists in the striving of every industrial capitalist nation to bring under its control or to annex larger and larger areas of *agrarian*" (Kautsky's italics)

"territory, irrespective of what nations inhabit those regions."\*

This definition is utterly worthless because it one-sidedly, i.e., arbitrarily, singles out only the national question (although the latter is extremely important in itself as well as in its relation to imperialism), it arbitrarily and *inaccurately* connects this question *only* with industrial capital in the countries which annex other nations, and in an equally arbitrary and inaccurate manner pushes into the forefront the annexation of agrarian regions.

Imperialism is a striving for annexations—this is what the *political* part of Kautsky's definition amounts to. It is correct, but very incomplete, for politically, imperialism is, in general, a striving towards violence and reaction. For the moment, however, we are interested in the *economic* aspect of the question, which Kautsky *himself* introduced into *his* definition. The inaccuracies in Kautsky's definition are glaring. The characteristic feature of imperialism is *not* industrial *but* finance capital. It is not an accident that in France it was precisely the extraordinarily rapid development of *finance* capital, and the weakening of industrial capital, that, from the 'eighties onwards, gave rise to the extreme intensification of annexationist (colonial) policy. The characteristic feature of imperialism is precisely that it strives to annex *not only* agrarian territories, but even most highly industrialized regions (German appetite for Belgium; French appetite for Lorraine), because 1) the fact that the world is already divided up obliges those contemplating a *redivision* to reach out for *every kind* of territory, and 2) an essential feature of imperialism is the rivalry between several Great Powers in the striving for hegemony, i.e., for the conquest of territory, not so much directly for themselves as to weaken the adversary and undermine *his* hegemony. (Belgium is particularly impor-

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\* *Die Neue Zeit*, 1914, 2 (Vol. 32), p. 909, Sept. 11, 1914; cf. 1915, 2, p. 107 et seq.

tant for Germany as a base for operations against England; England needs Bagdad as a base for operations against Germany, etc.)

Kautsky refers especially—and repeatedly—to Englishmen who, he alleges, have given a purely political meaning to the word “imperialism” in the sense that he, Kautsky, understands it. We take up the work by the Englishman Hobson, *Imperialism*, which appeared in 1902, and there we read:

“The new imperialism differs from the older, first, in substituting for the ambition of a single growing empire the theory and the practice of competing empires, each motivated by similar lusts of political aggrandizement and commercial gain; secondly, in the dominance of financial or investing over mercantile interests.”\*

We see that Kautsky is absolutely wrong in referring to Englishmen generally (unless he meant the vulgar English imperialists, or the avowed apologists for imperialism). We see that Kautsky, while claiming that he continues to advocate Marxism, as a matter of fact takes a step backward compared with the *social-liberal* Hobson, who *more correctly* takes into account two “historically concrete” (Kautsky’s definition is a mockery of historical concreteness!) features of modern imperialism: 1) the competition between *several* imperialisms, and 2) the predominance of the financier over the merchant. If it is chiefly a question of the annexation of agrarian countries by industrial countries, then the role of the merchant is put in the forefront.

Kautsky’s definition is not only wrong and un-Marxian. It serves as a basis for a whole system of views which signify a rupture with Marxian theory and Marxian practice all along the line. We shall refer to this later. The argument about words which Kautsky raises as to whether

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\* Hobson, *Imperialism*, London 1902; p. 324.



the latest stage of capitalism should be called "imperialism" or "the stage of finance capital" is absolutely frivolous. Call it what you will, it makes no difference. The essence of the matter is that Kautsky detaches the politics of imperialism from its economics, speaks of annexations as being a policy "preferred" by finance capital, and opposes to it another bourgeois policy which, he alleges, is possible on this very same basis of finance capital. It follows, then, that monopolies in economics are compatible with non-monopolistic, non-violent, non-annexionist methods in politics. It follows, then, that the territorial division of the world, which was completed precisely during the epoch of finance capital, and which constitutes the basis of the present peculiar forms of rivalry between the biggest capitalist states, is compatible with a non-imperialist policy. The result is a slurring-over and a blunting of the most profound contradictions of the latest stage of capitalism, instead of an exposure of their depth; the result is bourgeois reformism instead of Marxism.

Kautsky enters into controversy with the German apologist of imperialism and annexations, Cunow, who clumsily and cynically argues that imperialism is present-day capitalism; the development of capitalism is inevitable and progressive; therefore imperialism is progressive; therefore, we should grovel before it and glorify it! This is something like the caricature of the Russian Marxists which the Narodniks drew in 1894-95. They argued: if the Marxists believe that capitalism is inevitable in Russia, that it is progressive, then they ought to open a tavern and begin to implant capitalism! Kautsky's reply to Cunow is as follows: imperialism is not present-day capitalism; it is only one of the forms of the policy of present-day capitalism. This policy we can and should fight, fight imperialism, annexations, etc.

The reply seems quite plausible, but in effect it is a more subtle and more disguised (and therefore more dan-

gerous) advocacy of conciliation with imperialism, because a "fight" against the policy of the trusts and banks that does not affect the basis of the economics of the trusts and banks is nothing more than bourgeois reformism and pacifism, the benevolent and innocent expression of pious wishes. Evasion of existing contradictions, forgetting the most important of them, instead of revealing their full depth—such is Kautsky's theory, which has nothing in common with Marxism. Naturally, such a "theory" can only serve the purpose of advocating unity with the Cunows!

"From the purely economic point of view," writes Kautsky, "it is not impossible that capitalism will yet go through a new phase, that of the extension of the policy of the cartels to foreign policy, the phase of ultraimperialism,"\* i.e., of a superimperialism, of a union of the imperialisms of the whole world and not struggles among them, a phase when wars shall cease under capitalism, a phase of "the joint exploitation of the world by internationally united finance capital."\*\*

We shall have to deal with this "theory of ultraimperialism" later on in order to show in detail how definitely and utterly it breaks with Marxism. At present, in keeping with the general plan of the present work, we must examine the exact economic data on this question. "From the purely economic point of view," is "ultraimperialism" possible, or is it ultra-nonsense?

If by purely economic point of view a "pure" abstraction is meant, then all that can be said reduces itself to the following proposition: development is proceeding towards monopolies, hence, towards a single world monopoly, towards a single world trust. This is indisputable, but it is also as completely meaningless as is the statement

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\* *Die Neue Zeit*, 1914, 2 (Vol. 32), p. 921, Sept. 11, 1914. Cf. 1915, 2, p. 107 et seq.

\*\* *Die Neue Zeit*, 1915, 1, p. 144, April 30, 1915.

that "development is proceeding" towards the manufacture of foodstuffs in laboratories. In this sense the "theory" of ultraimperialism is no less absurd than a "theory of ultra-agriculture" would be.

If, however, we are discussing the "purely economic" conditions of the epoch of finance capital as a historically concrete epoch which opened at the beginning of the twentieth century, then the best reply that one can make to the lifeless abstractions of "ultraimperialism" (which serve exclusively a most reactionary aim: that of diverting attention from the depth of *existing* antagonisms) is to contrast them with the concrete economic realities of present-day world economy. Kautsky's utterly meaningless talk about ultraimperialism encourages, among other things, that profoundly mistaken idea which only brings grist to the mill of the apologists of imperialism, viz., that the rule of finance capital *lessens* the unevenness and contradictions inherent in world economy, whereas in reality it *increases* them.

R. Calwer, in his little book, *An Introduction to World Economics*,\* made an attempt to summarize the main, purely economic, data that enable one to obtain a concrete picture of the internal relations of world economy on the border line between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. He divides the world into five "main economic areas," as follows: 1) Central Europe (the whole of Europe with the exception of Russia and Great Britain); 2) Great Britain; 3) Russia; 4) Eastern Asia; 5) America; he includes the colonies in the "areas" of the states to which they belong and "leaves aside" a few countries not distributed according to areas, such as Persia, Afghanistan, and Arabia in Asia, Morocco and Abyssinia in Africa, etc.

Here is a brief summary of the economic data he quotes on these regions:

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\* R. Calwer, *Einführung in die Weltwirtschaft*, Berlin 1906.

Principal economic areas	Area	Pop.	Transport		Trade	Industry		
	Million sq. km.	Millions	Railways (thous. km.)	Mercantile fleet (million tons)	Imports & exports (billion marks)	Output		No. of cotton spindles (millions)
						of coal (mil- lion tons)	of pig iron (million tons)	
1) Central European	27.6 (23.6)*	388 (146)	204	8	41	251	15	26
2) British	28.9 (28.6)*	398 (355)	140	11	25	249	9	51
3) Russian	22	131	63	1	3	16	3	7
4) East Asian	12	389	8	1	2	8	0.02	2
5) American	30	148	379	6	14	245	14	19

We see three areas of highly developed capitalism (high development of means of transport, of trade and of industry): the Central European, the British and the American areas. Among these are three states which dominate the world: Germany, Great Britain, the United States. Imperialist rivalry and the struggle between these countries have become extremely keen because Germany has only an insignificant area and few colonies; the creation of "Central Europe" is still a matter for the future, it is being born in the midst of a desperate struggle. For the moment the distinctive feature of the whole of Europe is political incohesion. In the British and American areas, on the other hand, political concentration is very highly devel-

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\* The figures in parentheses show the area and population of the colonies.

oped, but there is a vast disparity between the immense colonies of the one and the insignificant colonies of the other. In the colonies, however, capitalism is only beginning to develop. The struggle for South America is becoming more and more acute.

There are two areas where capitalism is little developed: Russia and Eastern Asia. In the former, the density of population is extremely low, in the latter it is extremely high; in the former political concentration is high, in the latter it does not exist. The partition of China is only just beginning, and the struggle between Japan, U.S.A., etc., for it is continually gaining in intensity.

Compare this reality—the vast diversity of economic and political conditions, the extreme disparity in the rate of development of the various countries, etc., and the violent struggles among the imperialist states—with Kautsky's silly little fable about "peaceful" ultraimperialism. Is this not the reactionary attempt of a frightened philistine to hide from stern reality? Are not the international cartels which Kautsky imagines are the embryos of "ultraimperialism" (in the same way as one "can" describe the manufacture of tabloids in a laboratory as ultra-agriculture in embryo) an example of the division *and the redivision* of the world, the transition from peaceful division to non-peaceful division and vice versa? Is not American and other finance capital, which divided the whole world peacefully with Germany's participation in, for example, the international rail syndicate, or in the international mercantile shipping trust, now engaged in *redividing* the world on the basis of a new relation of forces, which is being changed by methods altogether *non-peaceful*?

Finance capital and the trusts do not diminish but increase the differences in the rate of growth of the various parts of the world economy. Once the relation of forces is changed, what other solution of the contradictions can be found *under capitalism* than that of *force*? Railway

statistics\* provide remarkably exact data on the different rates of growth of capitalism and finance capital in world economy. In the last decades of imperialist development, the total length of railways has changed as follows:

**RAILWAYS**  
(thousand kilometres)

	1890	1913	+
Europe . . . . .	224	346	+122
U.S.A. . . . .	268	411	+143
All colonies . . . . .	82	210	+128
Independent and semi-independent states of Asia and America . .	43	137	+94
	<div style="display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> <div style="font-size: 2em; margin-right: 10px;">}</div> <div style="text-align: center;">125</div> <div style="font-size: 2em; margin-left: 10px;">}</div> <div style="text-align: center;">347</div> </div>		+222
<i>Total</i> . . . . .	617	1,104	

Thus, the development of railways has been most rapid in the colonies and in the independent (and semi-independent) states of Asia and America. Here, as we know, the finance capital of the four or five biggest capitalist states reigns undisputed. Two hundred thousand kilometres of new railways in the colonies and in the other countries of Asia and America represent more than 40,000,000,000 marks in capital, newly invested on particularly advantageous terms, with special guarantees of a good return and with profitable orders for steel works, etc., etc.

Capitalism is growing with the greatest rapidity in the colonies and in overseas countries. Among the latter, *new* imperialist powers are emerging (e.g., Japan). The struggle

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\* *Statistisches Jahrbuch für das deutsche Reich, 1915; Archiv für Eisenbahnwesen, 1892 (Statistical Yearbook for the German Empire; Railroad Archive—Tr.)*. Minor details for the distribution of railways among the colonies of the various countries in 1890 had to be estimated approximately.

among the world imperialisms is becoming more acute. The tribute levied by finance capital on the most profitable colonial and overseas enterprises is increasing. In the division of this "booty," an exceptionally large part goes to countries which do not always stand at the top of the list as far as rapidity of development of productive forces is concerned. In the case of the biggest countries, considered with their colonies, the total length of railways was as follows:

(Thousands of kilometres)

	1890	1913	
U.S.A. . . . .	268	413	+ 145
British Empire . . . .	107	208	+ 101
Russia . . . . .	32	78	+ 46
Germany . . . . .	43	68	+ 25
France . . . . .	41	63	+ 22
<i>Total for 5 Powers . . .</i>	491	830	+ 339

Thus, about 80 per cent of the total existing railways are concentrated in the hands of the five biggest powers. But the concentration of the *ownership* of these railways, the concentration of finance capital, is immeasurably greater, for the French and English millionaires, for example, own an enormous amount of shares and bonds in American, Russian and other railways.

Thanks to her colonies, Great Britain has increased the length of "her" railways by 100,000 kilometres, four times as much as Germany. And yet, it is well known that the development of productive forces in Germany, and especially the development of the coal and iron industries, has been incomparably more rapid during this period than in England—not to speak of France and Russia. In 1892, Germany produced 4,900,000 tons of pig iron and Great

Britain produced 6,800,000 tons; in 1912, Germany produced 17,600,000 tons and Great Britain, 9,000,000 tons. Germany, therefore, had an overwhelming superiority over England in this respect.\* The question is: what means other than war could there be *under capitalism* of removing the disparity between the development of productive forces and the accumulation of capital on the one side, and the division of colonies and "spheres of influence" for finance capital on the other?

### VIII. THE PARASITISM AND DECAY OF CAPITALISM

We now have to examine yet another very important aspect of imperialism to which, usually, insufficient importance is attached in most of the discussions on this subject. One of the shortcomings of the Marxist Hilferding is that he takes a step backward compared with the non-Marxist Hobson. We refer to parasitism, which is characteristic of imperialism.

As we have seen, the deepest economic foundation of imperialism is monopoly. This is capitalist monopoly, i.e., monopoly which has grown out of capitalism and exists in the general environment of capitalism, commodity production and competition, in permanent and insoluble contradiction to this general environment. Nevertheless, like all monopoly, it inevitably engenders a tendency to stagnation and decay. Since monopoly prices are established, even temporarily, the motive cause of technical and, consequently, of all progress, disappears to a certain extent and, further, the *economic* possibility arises of deliberately retarding technical progress. For instance, in America, a

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\* Cf. also Edgar Crammond, "The Economic Relations of the British and German Empires" in *The Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*, July 1914, p. 777 et seq.



certain Owens invented a machine which revolutionized the manufacture of bottles. The German bottle-manufacturing cartel purchased Owens' patent, but pigeonholed it, refrained from utilizing it. Certainly, monopoly under capitalism can never completely, and for a very long period of time, eliminate competition in the world market (and this, by the by, is one of the reasons why the theory of ultra-imperialism is so absurd). Certainly, the possibility of reducing cost of production and increasing profits by introducing technical improvements operates in the direction of change. But the *tendency* to stagnation and decay, which is characteristic of monopoly, continues to operate, and in certain branches of industry, in certain countries, for certain periods of time, it gains the upper hand.

The monopoly ownership of very extensive, rich or well-situated colonies, operates in the same direction.

Further, imperialism is an immense accumulation of money capital in a few countries, amounting, as we have seen, to 100-150 billion francs in securities. Hence the extraordinary growth of a class, or rather, of a social stratum of rentiers, i.e., people who live by "clipping coupons," who take no part in any enterprise whatever, whose profession is idleness. The export of capital, one of the most essential economic bases of imperialism, still more completely isolates the rentiers from production and sets the seal of parasitism on the whole country that lives by exploiting the labour of several overseas countries and colonies.

"In 1893," writes Hobson, "the British capital invested abroad represented about 15 per cent of the total wealth of the United Kingdom."\* We will remind the reader that by 1915 this capital had increased about two and a half times. "Aggressive imperialism," says Hobson further on,

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\* Hobson, *op. cit.*, pp. 59, 60.

"which costs the taxpayer so dear, which is of so little value to the manufacturer and trader ... is a source of great gain to the investor.... The annual income Great Britain derives from commissions in her whole foreign and colonial trade, import and export, is estimated by Sir R. Giffen at £18,000,000 for 1899, taken at 2½ per cent, upon a turnover of £800,000,000." Great as this sum is, it cannot explain the aggressive imperialism of Great Britain. It is explained by the income of 90 to 100 million pounds sterling from "invested" capital, the income of the rentiers.

The income of the rentiers is *five times greater* than the income obtained from the foreign trade of the biggest "trading" country in the world. This is the essence of imperialism and imperialist parasitism.

For that reason the term, "rentier state" (*Rentnerstaat*) or usurer state, is coming into common use in the economic literature that deals with imperialism. The world has become divided into a handful of usurer states and a vast majority of debtor states. "At the top of the list of foreign investments," says Schulze-Gaevernitz, "are those placed in politically dependent or allied countries: Great Britain grants loans to Egypt, Japan, China and South America. Her navy plays here the part of bailiff in case of necessity. Great Britain's political power protects her from the indignation of her debtors."\* Sartorius von Waltershausen in his book, *The National Economic System of Foreign Investments*, cites Holland as the model "rentier state" and points out that Great Britain and France are now becoming such.\*\* Schilder is of the opinion that five industrial states have become "definitely pronounced creditor countries": Great Britain, France, Germany, Belgium and Switzerland. He does not include Holland in this list

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\* Schulze-Gaevernitz, *Britischer Imperialismus*, p. 320 et seq.

\*\* Sartorius von Waltershausen, *Das volkswirtschaftliche System*, etc., Berlin 1907, Buch IV.

simply because she is "industrially little developed."\* The United States is a creditor only of the American countries.

"Great Britain," says Schulze-Gaevernitz, "is gradually becoming transformed from an industrial into a creditor state. Notwithstanding the absolute increase in industrial output and the export of manufactured goods, the relative importance of income from interest and dividends, issues of securities, commissions and speculation is on the increase in the whole of the national economy. In my opinion it is precisely this that forms the economic basis of imperialist ascendancy. The creditor is more firmly attached to the debtor than the seller is to the buyer."\*\* In regard to Germany, A. Lansburgh, the publisher of the Berlin *Die Bank*, in 1911, in an article entitled "Germany—a Rentier State," wrote the following: "People in Germany are ready to sneer at the yearning to become rentiers that is observed among the people in France. But they forget that as far as the bourgeoisie is concerned the situation in Germany is becoming more and more like that in France."\*\*\*

The rentier state is a state of parasitic, decaying capitalism, and this circumstance cannot fail to influence all the social-political conditions of the countries affected in general, and the two fundamental trends in the working-class movement, in particular. To demonstrate this in the clearest possible manner we will quote Hobson, who is the most "reliable" witness, since he cannot be suspected of leanings towards "Marxist orthodoxy"; on the other hand, he is an Englishman who is very well acquainted with the situation in the country which is richest in colonies, in finance capital, and in imperialist experience.

With the Anglo-Boer War fresh in his mind, Hobson describes the connection between imperialism and the in-

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\* Schilder, *op. cit.*, p. 393.

\*\* Schulze-Gaevernitz, *Britischer Imperialismus*, p. 122.

\*\*\* *Die Bank*, 1911, 1, pp. 10-11.

terests of the "financiers," the growing profits from contracts, etc., and writes: "While the directors of this definitely parasitic policy are capitalists, the same motives appeal to special classes of the workers. In many towns, most important trades are dependent upon government employment or contracts; the imperialism of the metal and ship-building centres is attributed in no small degree to this fact." In this writer's opinion there are two causes which have weakened the old empires: 1) "economic parasitism," and 2) the formation of armies composed of subject peoples. "There is first the habit of economic parasitism, by which the ruling state has used its provinces, colonies, and dependencies in order to enrich its ruling class and to bribe its lower classes into acquiescence." And we would add that the economic possibility of such bribery, whatever its form may be, requires high monopolist profits.

As for the second cause, Hobson writes: "One of the strangest symptoms of the blindness of imperialism is the reckless indifference with which Great Britain, France and other imperial nations are embarking on this perilous dependence. Great Britain has gone farthest. Most of the fighting by which we have won our Indian Empire has been done by natives; in India, as more recently in Egypt, great standing armies are placed under British commanders; almost all the fighting associated with our African dominions, except in the southern part, has been done for us by natives."

Hobson gives the following economic appraisal of the prospect of the partition of China: "The greater part of Western Europe might then assume the appearance and character already exhibited by tracts of country in the South of England, in the Riviera, and in the tourist-ridden or residential parts of Italy and Switzerland, little clusters of wealthy aristocrats drawing dividends and pensions from the Far East, with a somewhat larger group of pro-

fessional retainers and tradesmen and a large body of personal servants and workers in the transport trade and in the final stages of production of the more perishable goods; all the main arterial industries would have disappeared, the staple foods and manufactures flowing in as tribute from Asia and Africa." "We have foreshadowed the possibility of even a larger alliance of Western States, a European federation of great powers which, so far from forwarding the cause of world civilization, might introduce the gigantic peril of a Western parasitism, a group of advanced industrial nations, whose upper classes drew vast tribute from Asia and Africa, with which they supported great tame masses of retainers, no longer engaged in the staple industries of agriculture and manufacture, but kept in the performance of personal or minor industrial services under the control of a new financial aristocracy. Let those who would scout such a theory" (it would be better to say: prospect) "as undeserving of consideration examine the economic and social condition of districts in Southern England today which are already reduced to this condition, and reflect upon the vast extension of such a system which might be rendered feasible by the subjection of China to the economic control of similar groups of financiers, investors, and political and business officials, draining the greatest potential reservoir of profit the world has ever known, in order to consume it in Europe. The situation is far too complex, the play of world-forces far too incalculable, to render this or any other single interpretation of the future very probable: but the influences which govern the Imperialism of Western Europe today are moving in this direction, and, unless counteracted or diverted, make towards some such consummation."\*

The author is quite right: *if* the forces of imperialism had not been counteracted they would have led precisely to what

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\* Hobson, *op cit.*, pp. 103, 205, 144, 335, 386.

he has described. The significance of a "United States of Europe" in the present imperialist situation is incorrectly appraised. He should have added, however, that, *also within* the working-class movement, the opportunists, who are for the moment victorious in most countries, are "working" systematically and undeviatingly in this very direction. Imperialism, which means the partition of the world, and the exploitation of other countries besides China, which means high monopoly profits for a handful of very rich countries, creates the economic possibility of bribing the upper strata of the proletariat, and thereby fosters, gives form to, and strengthens opportunism. We must not, however, lose sight of the forces which counteract imperialism in general, and opportunism in particular, and which, naturally, the social-liberal Hobson is unable to perceive.

The German opportunist, Gerhard Hildebrand, who was expelled from the Party for defending imperialism, and who could today be a leader of the so-called "Social-Democratic" Party of Germany, supplements Hobson well by his advocacy of a "United States of Western Europe" (without Russia) for the purpose of "joint" action . . . against the African Negroes, against the "great Islamic movement," for the maintenance of a "powerful army and navy," against a "Sino-Japanese coalition,"\* etc.

The description of "British imperialism" in Schulze-Gaevernitz's book reveals the same parasitical traits. The national income of Great Britain approximately doubled from 1865 to 1898, while the income "from abroad" increased *ninefold* in the same period. While the "merit" of imperialism is that it "trains the Negro to habits of industry" (not without coercion, of course . . .), the "danger" of

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\* Gerhard Hildebrand, *Die Erschütterung der Industriebherrschaft und des Industriesozialismus* (*The Shattering of the Rule of Industrialism and Industrial Socialism—Tr.*), 1910, p. 229 et seq.

imperialism lies in that "Europe will shift the burden of physical toil—first agricultural and mining, then the rougher work in industry—on to the coloured races, and itself be content with the role of rentier, and in this way, perhaps, pave the way for the economic, and later, the political emancipation of the coloured races."

An increasing proportion of land in Great Britain is being taken out of cultivation and used for sport, for the diversion of the rich. About Scotland—the most aristocratic playground in the world—it is said that "it lives on its past and on Mr. Carnegie." On horse racing and fox hunting alone Britain annually spends £14,000,000. The number of rentiers in England is about one million. The percentage of the productively-employed population to the total population is declining:

	Population	No. of workers in basic industries	Per cent of total population
	(millions)		
1851 . . . .	17.9	4.1	23%
1901 . . . .	32.5	4.9	15%

And in speaking of the British working class the bourgeois student of "British imperialism at the beginning of the twentieth century" is obliged to distinguish systematically between the "*upper stratum*" of the workers and the "*lower stratum of the proletariat proper*." The upper stratum furnishes the bulk of the membership of cooperatives, of trade unions, of sporting clubs and of numerous religious sects. To this level is adapted the electoral system, which in Great Britain is still "*sufficiently restricted to exclude the lower stratum of the proletariat proper*"!! In order to present the condition of the British working class in a rosy light, only this upper stratum—which constitutes a

minority of the proletariat—is generally spoken of. For instance, “the problem of unemployment is mainly a London problem and that of the lower proletarian stratum, *to which the politicians attach little importance...*”<sup>\*</sup> He should have said: to which the bourgeois politicians and the “Socialist” opportunists attach little importance.

One of the special features of imperialism connected with the facts we are describing, is the decline in emigration from imperialist countries and the increase in immigration into these countries from the more backward countries where lower wages are paid. As Hobson observes, emigration from Great Britain has been declining since 1884. In that year the number of emigrants was 242,000, while in 1900, the number was 169,000. Emigration from Germany reached the highest point between 1881 and 1890, with a total of 1,453,000 emigrants. In the course of the following two decades, it fell to 544,000 and to 341,000. On the other hand, there was an increase in the number of workers entering Germany from Austria, Italy, Russia and other countries. According to the 1907 census, there were 1,342,294 foreigners in Germany, of whom 440,800 were industrial workers and 257,329 agricultural workers.<sup>\*\*</sup> In France, the workers employed in the mining industry are, “in great part,” foreigners: Poles, Italians and Spaniards.<sup>\*\*\*</sup> In the United States, immigrants from Eastern and Southern Europe are engaged in the most poorly paid occupations, while American workers provide the highest percentage of overseers or of the better-paid workers.<sup>\*\*\*\*</sup> Imperialism has the tendency to create privileged sections also among the

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<sup>\*</sup> Schulze-Gaevernitz, *Britischer Imperialismus*, p. 301.

<sup>\*\*</sup> *Statistik des Deutschen Reichs* (*Statistics of the German Empire—Tr.*), Bd. 211.

<sup>\*\*\*</sup> Henger, *Die Kapitalsanlage der Franzosen* (*French Investments*), Stuttgart, 1913.

<sup>\*\*\*\*</sup> Hourwich, *Immigration and Labour*, New York 1913.



workers, and to detach them from the broad masses of the proletariat.

It must be observed that in Great Britain the tendency of imperialism to divide the workers, to strengthen opportunism among them and to cause temporary decay in the working-class movement, revealed itself much earlier than the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries; for two important distinguishing features of imperialism were already observed in Great Britain in the middle of the nineteenth century, viz., vast colonial possessions and a monopolist position in the world market. Marx and Engels traced this connection between opportunism in the working-class movement and the imperialist features of British capitalism systematically, during the course of several decades. For example, on October 7, 1858, Engels wrote to Marx: "The English proletariat is becoming more and more bourgeois, so that this most bourgeois of all nations is apparently aiming ultimately at the possession of a bourgeois aristocracy, and a bourgeois proletariat *as well as* a bourgeoisie. For a nation which exploits the whole world this is, of course, to a certain extent justifiable." Almost a quarter of a century later, in a letter dated August 11, 1881, Engels speaks of "...the worst type of English trade unions which allow themselves to be led by men bought by, or at least paid by, the bourgeoisie." In a letter to Kautsky, dated September 12, 1882, Engels wrote: "You ask me what the English workers think about colonial policy? Well, exactly the same as they think about politics in general. There is no workers' party here, there are only Conservatives and Liberal Radicals, and the workers merrily share the feast of England's monopoly of the colonies and the world market"\* (Engels expressed similar ideas in the

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\* Briefwechsel von Marx und Engels, Bd. II, S. 290; IV, 453--Karl Kautsky, *Sozialismus und Kolonialpolitik*, Berlin 1907, p. 79; this pamphlet was written by Kautsky in those infinitely distant days when he was still a Marxist.

press in his preface to the second edition of *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, which appeared in 1892).

This clearly shows the causes and effects. The causes are: 1) exploitation of the whole world by this country; 2) its monopolistic position in the world market; 3) its colonial monopoly. The effects are: 1) a section of the British proletariat becomes bourgeois; 2) a section of the proletariat permits itself to be led by men bought by, or at least paid by, the bourgeoisie. The imperialism of the beginning of the twentieth century completed the division of the world among a handful of states, each of which today exploits (i.e., draws superprofits from) a part of the "whole world" only a little smaller than that which England exploited in 1858; each of them occupies a monopoly position in the world market thanks to trusts, cartels, finance capital and creditor and debtor relations; each of them enjoys to some degree a colonial monopoly (we have seen that out of the total of 75,000,000 sq. km., which comprise the *whole* colonial world, 65,000,000 sq. km., or 86 per cent, belong to six powers; 61,000,000 sq. km., or 81 per cent, belong to three powers).

The distinctive feature of the present situation is the prevalence of such economic and political conditions as could not but increase the irreconcilability between opportunism and the general and vital interests of the working-class movement: imperialism has grown from the embryo into the predominant system; capitalist monopolies occupy first place in economics and politics; the division of the world has been completed; on the other hand, instead of the undivided monopoly of Great Britain, we see a few imperialist powers contending for the right to share in this monopoly, and this struggle is characteristic of the whole period of the beginning of the twentieth century. Opportunism cannot now be completely triumphant in the working-class movement of one country for decades as it was in England in

the second half of the nineteenth century; but in a number of countries it has grown ripe, overripe, and rotten, and has become completely merged with bourgeois policy in the form of "social chauvinism."\*

## IX. THE CRITIQUE OF IMPERIALISM

By the critique of imperialism, in the broad sense of the term, we mean the attitude towards imperialist policy of the different classes of society in connection with their general ideology.

The enormous dimensions of finance capital concentrated in a few hands and creating an extraordinarily far-flung and close network of relationships and connections which subordinates not only the small and medium, but also even the very small capitalists and small masters, on the one hand, and the increasingly intense struggle waged against other national state groups of financiers for the division of the world and domination over other countries, on the other hand, cause the possessing classes to go over entirely to the side of imperialism. "General" enthusiasm over the prospects of imperialism, furious defence of it and painting it in the brightest colours—such are the signs of the times. The imperialist ideology also penetrates the working class. No Chinese Wall separates it from the other classes. The leaders of the present-day, so-called, "Social-Democratic" Party of Germany are justly called "social-imperialists," that is, Socialists in words and imperialists in deeds; but as early as 1902, Hobson noted the existence in England of "Fabian imperialists" who belonged to the opportunist Fabian Society.

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\* Russian social-chauvinism in its avowed form represented by Messrs. the Potressovs, Chkhenkelis, Maslovs, etc., as well as in its tacit form, as represented by Messrs. Chkheidze, Skobelev, Axelrod, Martov, etc., also emerged from the Russian variety of opportunism, namely, Liquidatorism.

Bourgeois scholars and publicists 'usually come out in defence of imperialism in a somewhat veiled form; they obscure its complete domination and its profound roots, strive to push into the forefront particular and secondary details and do their very best to distract attention from essentials by means of absolutely ridiculous schemes for "reform," such as police supervision of the trusts or banks, etc. Less frequently, cynical and frank imperialists come forward who are bold enough to admit the absurdity of the idea of reforming the fundamental characteristics of imperialism.

We will give an example. The German imperialists attempt, in the magazine *Archives of World Economy*, to follow the movements for national emancipation in the colonies, particularly, of course, in colonies other than those belonging to Germany. They note the unrest and the protest movements in India, the movement in Natal (South Africa), in the Dutch East Indies, etc. One of them, commenting on an English report of a conference held on June 28-30, 1910, of representatives of various subject nations and races, of peoples of Asia, Africa and Europe who are subject to foreign rule, writes as follows in appraising the speeches delivered at this conference: "We are told that we must fight imperialism; that the ruling states should recognize the right of subject peoples to independence, that an international tribunal should supervise the fulfilment of treaties concluded between the great powers and weak peoples. Further than the expression of these pious wishes they do not go. We see no trace of understanding of the fact that imperialism is inseparably bound up with capitalism in its present form and that, therefore (!!), an open struggle against imperialism would be hopeless, unless, perhaps, the fight is confined to protests against certain of its especially abhorrent excesses."\* Since the reform of the

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\* *Weltwirtschaftliches Archiv*, Bd. II, p. 193.

basis of imperialism is a deception, a "pious wish," since the bourgeois representatives of the oppressed nations go no "further" forward, the bourgeois representative of an oppressing nation goes "further" *backward*, to servility towards imperialism under cover of the claim to be "scientific." "Logic," indeed!

The questions as to whether it is possible to reform the basis of imperialism, whether to go forward to the further intensification and deepening of the antagonisms which it engenders, or backwards, towards allaying these antagonisms, are fundamental questions in the critique of imperialism. Since the specific political features of imperialism are reaction all along the line and increased national oppression resulting from the oppression of the financial oligarchy and the elimination of free competition, a petty-bourgeois-democratic opposition to imperialism arose in the beginning of the twentieth century in nearly all imperialist countries. And the desertion of Kautsky and of the broad international Kautskyan trend from Marxism consists precisely in the fact that Kautsky not only did not trouble to oppose, was not only unable to oppose this petty-bourgeois reformist opposition, which is really reactionary in its economic basis, but became merged with it in practice.

In the United States, the imperialist war waged against Spain in 1898 stirred up the opposition of the "anti-imperialists," the last of the Mohicans of bourgeois democracy, who declared this war to be "criminal," regarded the annexation of foreign territories as a violation of the Constitution, declared that the treatment of Aguinaldo, leader of the native Filipinos (the Americans promised him the independence of his country, but later they landed troops and annexed it) as "Jingo treachery," and quoted the words of Lincoln: "When the white man governs himself, that is self-government; but when he governs himself and also governs others, it is no longer self-government; it is despot-

ism.”\* But while all this criticism shrank from recognizing the inseverable bond between imperialism and the trusts, and, therefore, between imperialism and the foundations of capitalism, while it shrank from joining the forces engendered by large-scale capitalism and its development—it remained a “pious wish.”

This is also the main attitude taken by Hobson in his critique of imperialism. Hobson anticipated Kautsky in protesting against the “inevitability of imperialism” argument, and in urging the necessity of “increasing the consuming capacity” of the people (under capitalism!). The petty-bourgeois point of view in the critique of imperialism, the omnipotence of the banks, the financial oligarchy, etc., is adopted by the authors we have often quoted, such as Agahd, A. Lansburgh, L. Eschwege, and among the French writers, Victor Bérard, author of a superficial book entitled *England and Imperialism* which appeared in 1900. All these authors, who make no claim to be Marxists, contrast imperialism with free competition and democracy, condemn the Bagdad railway scheme as leading to conflicts and war, utter “pious wishes” for peace, etc. This applies also to the compiler of international stock and share issue statistics, A. Neymarck, who, after calculating the hundreds of billions of francs representing “international” securities, exclaimed in 1912: “Is it possible to believe that peace may be disturbed . . . that, in the face of these enormous figures, anyone would risk starting a war?”\*\*

Such simple-mindedness on the part of the bourgeois economists is not surprising; moreover, *it is in their interest* to pretend to be so naive and to talk “seriously” about peace under imperialism. But what remains of Kautsky’s Marxism, when, in 1914, 1915 and 1916, he takes up the

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\* J. Patouillet, *L’impérialisme américain*, Dijon 1904, p. 272.

\*\* *Bulletin de l’Institut International de Statistique*, t. XIX, livr. II, p. 225.

same bourgeois-reformist point of view and affirms that "everybody is agreed" (imperialists, pseudo Socialists and social-pacifists) on the matter of peace? Instead of an analysis of imperialism and an exposure of the depths of its contradictions, we have nothing but a reformist "pious wish" to wave them aside, to evade them.

Here is a sample of Kautsky's economic criticism of imperialism. He takes the statistics of the British export and import trade with Egypt for 1872 and 1912; it transpires that this export and import trade has grown more slowly than British foreign trade as a whole. From this Kautsky concludes that: "we have no reason to suppose that without military occupation the growth of British trade with Egypt would have been less, simply as a result of the mere operation of economic factors." "The urge of capital to expand . . . can be best promoted, not by the violent methods of imperialism, but by peaceful democracy."\*

This argument of Kautsky's which is repeated in every key by his Russian armour-bearer (and Russian shielder of the social-chauvinists), Mr. Spectator, constitutes the basis of Kautskyan critique of imperialism, and that is why we must deal with it in greater detail. We will begin with a quotation from Hilferding, whose conclusions Kautsky on many occasions, and notably in April 1915, has declared to have been "unanimously adopted by all socialist theoreticians."

"It is not the business of the proletariat," writes Hilferding, "to contrast the more progressive capitalist policy with that of the now bygone era of free trade and of hostility towards the state. The reply of the proletariat to the economic policy of finance capital, to imperialism, cannot be free trade, but Socialism. The aim of proletarian policy can-

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\* Kautsky, *Nationalstaat, imperialistischer Staat und Staatenbund* (*National State, Imperialist State and Union of States—Tr.*), Nürnberg 1915, pp. 72 and 70.

not now be the ideal of restoring free competition—which has now become a reactionary ideal—but the complete elimination of competition by the abolition of capitalism.”\*

Kautsky broke with Marxism by advocating in the epoch of finance capital a “reactionary ideal,” “peaceful democracy,” “the mere operation of economic factors,” for *objectively* this ideal drags us back from monopoly to non-monopolist capitalism, and is a reformist swindle.

Trade with Egypt (or with any other colony or semi-colony) “would have grown more” *without* military occupation, without imperialism, and without finance capital. What does this mean? That capitalism would have developed more rapidly if free competition had not been restricted by monopolies in general, or by the “connections,” yoke (i.e., also the monopoly) of finance capital, or by the monopolist possession of colonies by certain countries?

Kautsky’s argument can have no other meaning; and *this* “meaning” is meaningless. Let us assume that free competition, without any sort of monopoly, *would* have developed capitalism and trade more rapidly. But the more rapidly trade and capitalism develop, the greater is the concentration of production and capital which *gives rise* to monopoly. And monopolies have *already* arisen—precisely *out of* free competition! Even if monopolies have now begun to retard progress, it is not an argument in favour of free competition, which has become impossible after it has given rise to monopoly.

Whichever way one turns Kautsky’s argument, one will find nothing in it except reaction and bourgeois reformism.

Even if we correct this argument and say, as Spectator says, that the trade of the British colonies with England is now developing more slowly than their trade with other countries, it does not save Kautsky; for it is *also* monop-

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\* *Finance Capital*, p. 567.



oly, *also* imperialism that is beating Great Britain, only it is the monopoly and imperialism of another country (America, Germany). It is known that the cartels have given rise to a new and peculiar form of protective tariffs, i.e., goods suitable for export are protected (Engels noted this in Vol. III of *Capital*). It is known, too, that the cartels and finance capital have a system peculiar to themselves, that of "exporting goods at cut-rate prices," or "dumping," as the English call it: within a given country the cartel sells its goods at high monopoly prices, but sells them abroad at a much lower price to undercut the competitor, to enlarge its own production to the utmost, etc. If Germany's trade with the British colonies is developing more rapidly than Great Britain's, it only proves that German imperialism is younger, stronger and better organized than British imperialism, is superior to it; but it by no means proves the "superiority" of free trade, for it is not a fight between free trade and protection and colonial dependence, but between two rival imperialisms, two monopolies, two groups of finance capital. The superiority of German imperialism over British imperialism is more potent than the wall of colonial frontiers or of protective tariffs: to use this as an "argument" *in favour* of free trade and "peaceful democracy" is banal, it means forgetting the essential features and characteristics of imperialism, substituting petty-bourgeois reformism for Marxism.

It is interesting to note that even the bourgeois economist, A. Lansburgh, whose criticism of imperialism is as petty-bourgeois as Kautsky's, nevertheless got closer to a more scientific study of trade statistics. He did not compare only one country, chosen at random, and only a colony with the other countries; he examined the export trade of an imperialist country: 1) with countries which are financially dependent upon it, which borrow money from it; and 2) with countries which are financially independent. He obtained the following results:

## EXPORT TRADE OF GERMANY

(million marks)

		1889	1908	Per cent increase
To Countries Financially Dependent on Germany	Rumania . . . . .	48.2	70.8	47%
	Portugal . . . . .	19.0	32.8	73%
	Argentina . . . . .	60.7	147.0	143%
	Brazil . . . . .	48.7	84.5	73%
	Chile . . . . .	28.3	52.4	85%
	Turkey . . . . .	29.9	64.0	114%
Total . . . . .		234.8	451.5	92%
To Countries Financially Independent of Germany	Great Britain . . . . .	651.8	997.4	53%
	France . . . . .	210.2	437.9	108%
	Belgium . . . . .	137.2	322.8	135%
	Switzerland . . . . .	177.4	401.1	127%
	Australia . . . . .	21.2	64.5	205%
	Dutch East Indies . . . . .	8.8	40.7	363%
Total . . . . .		1,206.6	2,264.4	87%

Lansburgh did not draw *conclusions* and therefore, strangely enough, failed to observe that *if* the figures prove anything at all, they prove that *he is wrong*, for the exports to countries financially dependent on Germany have grown *more rapidly*, if only slightly, than those to the countries which are financially independent. (We emphasize the "if," for Lansburgh's figures are far from complete.)

Tracing the connection between exports and loans, Lansburgh writes:

"In 1890-91, a Rumanian loan was floated through the German banks, which had already in previous years made advances on this loan. It was used chiefly to purchase railway materials in Germany. In 1891 German exports to Rumania amounted to 55,000,000 marks. The following year they dropped to 39,400,000 marks and, with fluctuations, to 25,400,000 in 1900. Only in very recent years have they regained the level of 1891, thanks to two new loans.

"German exports to Portugal rose, following the loans

of 1888-89, to 21,100,000 (1890); then, in the two following years, they dropped to 16,200,000 and 7,400,000, and regained their former level only in 1903.

The figures of German trade with Argentina are still more striking. Following the loans floated in 1888 and 1890, German exports to Argentina reached, in 1889, 60,700,000 marks. Two years later they only reached 18,600,000 marks, less than one-third of the previous figure. It was not until 1901 that they regained and surpassed the level of 1889, and then only as a result of new loans floated by the state and by municipalities, with advances to build power stations, and with other credit operations.

"Exports to Chile, as a consequence of the loan of 1889, rose to 45,200,000 marks (in 1892), and a year later dropped to 22,500,000 marks. A new Chilean loan floated by the German banks in 1906 was followed by a rise of exports to 84,700,000 marks in 1907, only to fall again to 52,400,000 marks in 1908."\*

From these facts Lansburgh draws the amusing petty-bourgeois moral of how unstable and irregular export trade is when it is bound up with loans, how bad it is to invest capital abroad instead of "naturally" and "harmoniously" developing home industry, how "costly" are the millions in backsheesh that Krupp has to pay in floating foreign loans, etc. But the facts tell us clearly: the increase in exports is *precisely* connected with the swindling tricks of finance capital, which is not concerned with bourgeois morality, but with skinning the ox twice—first, it pockets the profits from the loan; then it pockets other profits from the *same* loan which the borrower uses to make purchases from Krupp, or to purchase railway material from the Steel Syndicate, etc.

We repeat that we do not by any means consider Lansburgh's figures to be perfect; but we had to quote

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\* *Die Bank*, 1909, 2, p. 819 et seq.

them because they are more scientific than Kautsky's and Spectator's, and because Lansburgh showed the correct way to approach the question. In discussing the significance of finance capital in regard to exports, etc., one must be able to single out the connection of exports especially and solely with the tricks of the financiers, especially and solely with the sale of goods by cartels, etc. Simply to compare colonies with non-colonies, one imperialism with another imperialism, one semicolony or colony (Egypt) with all other countries, is to evade and to obscure the very *essence* of the question.

Kautsky's theoretical critique of imperialism has nothing in common with Marxism and serves only as a preamble to propaganda for peace and unity with the opportunists and the social-chauvinists, precisely for the reason that it evades and obscures the very profound and fundamental contradictions of imperialism: the contradictions between monopoly and free competition which exists side by side with it, between the gigantic "operations" (and gigantic profits) of finance capital and "honest" trade in the free market, the contradiction between cartels and trusts, on the one hand, and non-cartelized industry, on the other, etc.

The notorious theory of "ultraimperialism," invented by Kautsky, is just as reactionary. Compare his arguments on this subject in 1915, with Hobson's arguments in 1902.

Kautsky: "... Cannot the present imperialist policy be supplanted by a new, ultraimperialist policy, which will introduce the joint exploitation of the world by internationally united finance capital in place of the mutual rivalries of national finance capitals? Such a new phase of capitalism is at any rate conceivable. Can it be achieved? Sufficient premises are still lacking to enable us to answer this question."\*

Hobson: "Christendom thus laid out in a few great federal empires, each with a retinue of uncivilized dependencies,

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\* *Die Neue Zeit*, April 30, 1915, p. 144.

seems to many the most legitimate development of present tendencies, and one which would offer the best hope of permanent peace on an assured basis of inter-Imperialism."

Kaŭtsky called ultraimperialism or superimperialism what Hobson, thirteen years earlier, described as interimperialism. Except for coining a new and clever catchword, replacing one Latin prefix by another, the only progress Kaŭtsky has made in the sphere of "scientific" thought is that he gave out as Marxism what Hobson, in effect, described as the cant of English parsons. After the Anglo-Boer War it was quite natural for this highly honourable caste to exert their main efforts to *console* the British middle class and the workers who had lost many of their relatives on the battlefields of South Africa and who were obliged to pay higher taxes in order to guarantee still higher profits for the British financiers. And what better consolation could there be than the theory that imperialism is not so bad; that it stands close to inter- (or ultra-) imperialism, which can ensure permanent peace? No matter what the good intentions of the English parsons, or of sentimental Kaŭtsky, may have been, the only objective, i.e., real, social significance Kaŭtsky's "theory" can have, is: a most reactionary method of consoling the masses with hopes of permanent peace being possible under capitalism, by distracting their attention from the sharp antagonisms and acute problems of the present times, and directing it towards illusory prospects of an imaginary "ultraimperialism" of the future. Deception of the masses—there is nothing but this in Kaŭtsky's "Marxian" theory.

Indeed, it is enough to compare well-known and indisputable facts to become convinced of the utter falsity of the prospects which Kaŭtsky tries to conjure up before the German workers (and the workers of all lands). Let us consider India, Indo-China and China. It is known that these three colonial and semicolonial countries, with a population of six to seven hundred million, are subjected to the

exploitation of the finance capital of several imperialist powers: Great Britain, France, Japan, the U.S.A., etc. Let us assume that these imperialist countries form alliances against one another in order to protect or enlarge their possessions, their interests and their "spheres of influence" in these Asiatic states; these alliances will be "interimperialist," or "ultraimperialist" alliances. Let us assume that *all* the imperialist countries conclude an alliance for the "peaceful" division of these parts of Asia; this alliance would be an alliance of "internationally united finance capital." There are actual examples of alliances of this kind in the history of the twentieth century, for instance, the attitude of the powers to China. We ask, is it "conceivable," assuming that the capitalist system remains intact—and this is precisely the assumption that Kautsky does make—that such alliances would be more than temporary, that they would eliminate friction, conflicts and struggle in every possible form?

It is sufficient to state this question clearly to make it impossible for any reply to be given other than in the negative; for any other basis under capitalism for the division of spheres of influence, of interests, of colonies, etc., than a calculation of the *strength* of the participants in the division, their general economic, financial, military strength, etc., is *inconceivable*. And the strength of these participants in the division does not change to an equal degree, for the *even* development of different undertakings, trusts, branches of industry, or countries is impossible under capitalism. Half a century ago Germany was a miserable, insignificant country, as far as her capitalist strength was concerned, compared with the strength of England at that time; Japan was the same compared with Russia. Is it "conceivable" that in ten or twenty years' time the relative strength of the imperialist powers will have remained *unchanged*? Absolutely *inconceivable*.

Therefore, in the realities of the capitalist system, and not in the banal philistine fantasies of English parsons, or

of the German "Marxist," Kautsky, "interimperialist" or "ultraimperialist" alliances, no matter what form they may assume, whether of one imperialist coalition against another, or of a general alliance embracing *all* the imperialist powers, are inevitably nothing more than a "truce" in periods between wars. Peaceful alliances prepare the ground for wars, and in their turn grow out of wars; the one conditions the other, giving rise to alternating forms of peaceful and non-peaceful struggle out of *one and the same* basis of imperialist connections and relations within world economics and world politics. But in order to pacify the workers and to reconcile them with the social-chauvinists who have deserted to the side of the bourgeoisie, wise Kautsky *separates* one link of a single chain from the other, separates the present peaceful (and ultraimperialist, nay, ultra-ultraimperialist) alliance of *all* the powers for the "pacification" of China (remember the suppression of the Boxer Rebellion) from the non-peaceful conflict of tomorrow, which will prepare the ground for another "peaceful" general alliance for the partition, say, of Turkey, on the day after tomorrow, *etc., etc.* Instead of showing the living connection between periods of imperialist peace and periods of imperialist war, Kautsky presents the workers with a lifeless abstraction in order to reconcile them to their lifeless leaders.

An American writer, Hill, in his *A History of Diplomacy in the International Development of Europe* notes in his preface to the following periods in the recent history of diplomacy: 1) the era of revolution; 2) the constitutional movement; 3) the present era of "commercial imperialism."\* Another writer divides the history of Great Britain's "world policy" since 1870 into four periods: 1) the first Asiatic period (that of the struggle against Russia's advance in Central Asia towards India); 2) the African period (approximately 1885-1902): that of the struggle against France for the

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\* David Jayne Hill, *A History of the Diplomacy in the International Development of Europe*, Vol. I, p. x.

partition of Africa (the "Fashoda incident" of 1898 which brought her within a hair's breadth of war with France); 3) the second Asiatic period (alliance with Japan against Russia), and 4) the "European" period, chiefly anti-German.\* "The political skirmishes of outposts take place on the financial field," wrote the "banker," Riesser, in 1905, in showing how French finance capital operating in Italy was preparing the way for a political alliance of these countries, and how a conflict was developing between Germany and Great Britain over Persia, between all the European capitalists over Chinese loans, etc. Behold, the living reality of peaceful "ultraimperialist" alliances in their inseparable connection with ordinary imperialist conflicts!

Kautsky's obscuring of the deepest contradictions of imperialism, which inevitably becomes the embellishment of imperialism, leaves its traces in this writer's criticism of the political features of imperialism. Imperialism is the epoch of finance capital and of monopolies, which introduce everywhere the striving for domination, not for freedom. The result of these tendencies is reaction all along the line, whatever the political system, and an extreme intensification of existing antagonisms in this domain also. Particularly intensified become the yoke of national oppression and the striving for annexations, i.e., the violation of national independence (for annexation is nothing but the violation of the right of nations to self-determination). Hilferding rightly notes the connection between imperialism and the intensification of national oppression. "In the newly opened up countries," he writes, "the capital imported into them intensifies antagonisms and excites against the intruders the constantly growing resistance of the peoples who are awakening to national consciousness; this resistance can easily develop into dangerous measures against foreign capital. The old social rela-

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\* Schilder. *op. cit.*, p. 178.



tions become completely revolutionized, the ægelong agrarian isolation of 'nations without history' is destroyed and they are drawn into the capitalist whirlpool. Capitalism itself gradually provides the subjugated with the means and resources for their emancipation and they set out to achieve the goal which once seemed highest to the European nations: the creation of a united national state as a means to economic and cultural freedom. This movement for national independence threatens European capital in its most valuable and most promising fields of exploitation, and European capital can maintain its domination only by continually increasing its military forces."\*

To this must be added that it is not only in newly opened up countries, but also in the old, that imperialism is leading to annexation, to increased national oppression, and, consequently, also to increasing resistance. While objecting to the intensification of political reaction by imperialism, Kautsky leaves in the shade a question that has become particularly urgent, viz., the impossibility of unity with the opportunists in the epoch of imperialism. While objecting to annexations, he presents his objections in a form that is most acceptable and least offensive to the opportunists. He addresses himself to a German audience, yet he obscures the most topical and important point, for instance, the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine by Germany. In order to appraise this "mental aberration" of Kautsky's we will take the following example. Let us suppose that a Japanese is condemning the annexation of the Philippines by the Americans. The question is: will many believe that he is doing so because he has a horror of annexations as such, and not because he himself has a desire to annex the Philippines? And shall we not be constrained to admit that the "fight" the Japanese is waging against annexations can be regarded as being sincere and politically honest

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\* *Finance Capital*, p. 487.

only if he fights against the annexation of Korea by Japan, and urges freedom for Korea to secede from Japan?

Kautsky's theoretical analysis of imperialism, as well as his economic and political criticism of imperialism, are permeated *through and through* with a spirit, absolutely irreconcilable with Marxism, of obscuring and glossing over the fundamental contradictions of imperialism and with a striving to preserve at all costs the crumbling unity with opportunism in the European working-class movement.

## X. THE PLACE OF IMPERIALISM IN HISTORY

We have seen that in its economic essence imperialism is monopoly capitalism. This in itself determines its place in history, for monopoly that grows out of the soil of free competition, and precisely out of free competition, is the transition from the capitalist system to a higher social-economic order. We must take special note of the four principal types of monopoly, or principal manifestations of monopoly capitalism, which are characteristic of the epoch we are examining.

Firstly, monopoly arose out of a very high stage of development of the concentration of production. This refers to the monopolist capitalist combines, cartels, syndicates and trusts. We have seen the important part these play in present-day economic life. At the beginning of the twentieth century, monopolies had acquired complete supremacy in the advanced countries, and although the first steps towards the formation of the cartels were first taken by countries enjoying the protection of high tariffs (Germany, America), Great Britain, with her system of free trade, revealed the same basic phenomenon, only a little later, namely, the birth of monopoly out of the concentration of production.

Secondly, monopolies have stimulated the seizure of the most important sources of raw materials, especially for

the basic and most highly cartelized industries in capitalist society: the coal and iron industries. The monopoly of the most important sources of raw materials has enormously increased the power of big capital, and has sharpened the antagonism between cartelized and non-cartelized industry.

Thirdly, monopoly has sprung from the banks. The banks have developed from humble middlemen enterprises into the monopolists of finance capital. Some three to five of the biggest banks in each of the foremost capitalist countries have achieved the "personal union" of industrial and bank capital, and have concentrated in their hands the control of thousands upon thousands of millions which form the greater part of the capital and income of entire countries. A financial oligarchy, which throws a close network of dependence relationships over all the economic and political institutions of present-day bourgeois society without exception—such is the most striking manifestation of this monopoly.

Fourthly, monopoly has grown out of colonial policy. To the numerous "old" motives of colonial policy, finance capital has added the struggle for the sources of raw materials, for the export of capital, for "spheres of influence," i.e., for spheres for profitable deals, concessions, monopolist profits and so on, and finally, for economic territory in general. When the colonies of the European powers in Africa, for instance, comprised only one-tenth of that territory (as was the case in 1876), colonial policy was able to develop by methods other than those of monopoly—by the "free grabbing" of territories, so to speak. But when nine-tenths of Africa had been seized (by 1900), when the whole world had been divided up, there was inevitably ushered in the era of monopoly ownership of colonies and, consequently, of particularly intense struggle for the division and the redivision of the world.

The extent to which monopolist capital has intensified all the contradictions of capitalism is generally known. It

is sufficient to mention the high cost of living and the tyranny of the cartels. This intensification of contradictions constitutes the most powerful driving force of the transitional period of history, which began from the time of the final victory of world finance capital.

Monopolies, oligarchy, the striving for domination instead of striving for liberty, the exploitation of an increasing number of small or weak nations by a handful of the richest or most powerful nations—all these have given birth to those distinctive characteristics of imperialism which compel us to define it as parasitic or decaying capitalism. More and more prominently there emerges, as one of the tendencies of imperialism, the creation of the "rentier state," the usurer state, in which the bourgeoisie to an ever increasing degree lives on the proceeds of capital exports and by "clipping coupons." It would be a mistake to believe that this tendency to decay precludes the rapid growth of capitalism. It does not. In the epoch of imperialism, certain branches of industry, certain strata of the bourgeoisie and certain countries betray, to a greater or lesser degree, now one and now another of these tendencies. On the whole, capitalism is growing far more rapidly than before; but this growth is not only becoming more and more uneven in general, its unevenness also manifests itself, in particular, in the decay of the countries which are richest in capital (England).

In regard to the rapidity of Germany's economic development, Riesser, the author of the book on the big German banks, states: "The progress of the preceding period (1848-70), which had not been exactly slow, stood in about the same ratio to the rapidity with which the whole of Germany's national economy, and with it German banking, progressed during this period (1870-1905) as the speed of the mail coach in the good old days stood to the speed of the present-day automobile... which is whizzing past so fast that it endangers not only innocent pedestrians in its path, but also the occupants of the car." In its turn, this

finance capital which has grown with such extraordinary rapidity is not unwilling, precisely because it has grown so quickly, to pass on to a more "tranquil" possession of colonies which have to be seized—and not only by peaceful methods—from richer nations. In the United States, economic development in the last decades has been even more rapid than in Germany, and *for this very reason*, the parasitic features of modern American capitalism have stood out with particular prominence. On the other hand, a comparison of, say, the republican American bourgeoisie with the monarchist Japanese or German bourgeoisie shows that the most pronounced political distinction diminishes to an extreme degree in the epoch of imperialism—not because it is unimportant in general, but because in all these cases we are discussing a bourgeoisie which has definite features of parasitism.

The receipt of high monopoly profits by the capitalists in one of the numerous branches of industry, in one of the numerous countries, etc., makes it economically possible for them to bribe certain sections of the workers, and for a time a fairly considerable minority of them, and win them to the side of the bourgeoisie of a given industry or given nation against all the others. The intensification of antagonisms between imperialist nations for the division of the world increases this striving. And so there is created that bond between imperialism and opportunism, which revealed itself first and most clearly in England, owing to the fact that certain features of imperialist development were observable there much earlier than in other countries. Some writers, L. Martov, for example, are prone to wave aside the connection between imperialism and opportunism in the working-class movement—a particularly glaring fact at the present time—by resorting to "official optimism" (à la Kautsky and Huysmans) like the following: the cause of the opponents of capitalism would be hopeless if it were precisely progressive capitalism that led

banks themselves combined into cartels; the investment capital of the nation cast in the shape of securities. Then the forecast of that genius Saint-Simon will be fulfilled. 'The present anarchy of production, which corresponds to the fact that economic relations are developing without uniform regulation, must make way for organization in production. Production will no longer be directed by isolated manufacturers, independent of each other and ignorant of man's economic needs; that will be done by a certain public institution. A central committee of management, being able to survey the large field of social economy from a more elevated point of view, will regulate it for the benefit of the whole of society, will put the means of production into suitable hands, and above all will take care that there be constant harmony between production and consumption. Institutions already exist which have assumed as part of their functions a certain organization of economic labour: the banks.' We are still a long way from the fulfilment of Saint-Simon's forecast, but we are on the way towards it: Marxism, different from what Marx imagined, but different only in form."\*

A crushing "refutation" of Marx, indeed, which retreats a step from Marx's precise, scientific analysis to Saint-Simon's guesswork, the guesswork of a genius, but guesswork all the same.

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V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*,  
Fourth Russian Edition,  
Vol. XXII, pp. 173-290

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\* *Grundriss der Sozialökonomik (Principles of Social Economics - Tr.)*, p. 146.

## THE WAR PROGRAM OF THE PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION

In Holland, Scandinavia and Switzerland, voices are heard among the revolutionary Social-Democrats who are combating the social-chauvinist lies about "defence of the fatherland" in the present imperialist war, in favour of substituting for the old point in the Social-Democratic minimum program: "militia," or "the armed nation," a new one: "disarmament." The *Jugendinternationale* has inaugurated a discussion on this question and has published in No. 3 an editorial article in favour of disarmament. In R. Grimm's latest theses, we regret to note, there is also a concession to the "disarmament" idea. Discussions have been started in the periodicals *Neues Leben* and *Vorbote*.

Let us examine the position of the advocates of disarmament.

### I

The main argument is that the demand for disarmament is the clearest, most decisive, most consistent expression of the struggle against all militarism and against all war.

But this main argument is precisely the principal error of the advocates of disarmament. Socialists cannot, without ceasing to be Socialists, be opposed to all war.

In the first place, Socialists have never been, nor can they ever be, opposed to revolutionary wars. The bour-

geoisie of the "Great" imperialist Powers has become thoroughly reactionary, and we regard the war which *this* bourgeoisie is now waging as a reactionary, slaveowners' and criminal war. But what about a war *against* this bourgeoisie? For example, a war waged by people who are oppressed by and dependent upon this bourgeoisie, by colonial peoples, for their liberation? In the theses of the *Internationale* group, in §5, we read: "In the era of this unbridled imperialism there can be no more national wars of any kind." This is obviously wrong.

The history of the twentieth century, this century of "unbridled imperialism," is replete with colonial wars. But what we Europeans, the imperialist oppressors of the majority of the peoples of the world, with our habitual, despicable European chauvinism, call "colonial wars" are often national wars, or national rebellions of those oppressed peoples. One of the main features of imperialism is that it accelerates the development of capitalism in the most backward countries, and thereby widens and intensifies the struggle against national oppression. This is a fact. It inevitably follows from this that imperialism must often give rise to national wars. *Junius*,<sup>71</sup> who in her pamphlet defends the above-quoted "theses," says that in the imperialist epoch every national war against one of the imperialist Great Powers leads to the intervention of another competing imperialist Great Power and thus, every national war is converted into an imperialist war. But this argument is also wrong. This *may* happen, but it does not always happen. Many colonial wars in the period between 1900 and 1914 did not follow this road. And it would be simply ridiculous if we declared, for instance, that after the present war, if it ends in the extreme exhaustion of all the belligerents, "there can be no" national, progressive, revolutionary wars "whatever," waged, say, by China in alliance with India, Persia, Siam, etc., against the Great Powers.



To deny all possibility of national wars under imperialism is wrong in theory, obviously mistaken historically, and in practice is tantamount to European chauvinism: we who belong to nations that oppress hundreds of millions of people in Europe, Africa, Asia, etc., must tell the oppressed peoples that it is "impossible" for them to wage war against "our" nations!

Secondly, civil wars are also wars. Whoever recognizes the class struggle cannot fail to recognize civil wars, which in every class society are the natural, and under certain conditions, inevitable continuation, development and intensification of the class struggle. All the great revolutions prove this. To repudiate civil war, or to forget about it, would mean sinking into extreme opportunism and renouncing the socialist revolution.

Thirdly, the victory of Socialism in one country does not at one stroke eliminate all war in general. On the contrary, it presupposes such wars. The development of capitalism proceeds extremely unevenly in the various countries. It cannot be otherwise under the commodity production system. From this it follows irrefutably that Socialism cannot achieve victory simultaneously *in all* countries. It will achieve victory first in one or several countries, while the others will remain bourgeois or prebourgeois for some time. This must not only create friction, but a direct striving on the part of the bourgeoisie of other countries to crush the victorious proletariat of the socialist state. In such cases a war on our part would be a legitimate and just war. It would be a war for Socialism, for the liberation of other nations from the bourgeoisie. Engels was perfectly right when, in his letter to Kautsky, September 12, 1882, he openly admitted that it was possible for *already victorious* Socialism to wage "defensive wars." What he had in mind was defence of the victorious proletariat against the bourgeoisie of other countries.

Only after we have overthrown, finally vanquished, and expropriated the bourgeoisie of the whole world, and not only of one country, will wars become impossible. And from a scientific point of view it would be utterly wrong and utterly unrevolutionary for us to evade or gloss over the most important thing, namely, that the most difficult task, the one demanding the greatest amount of fighting in the *transition* to Socialism, is to crush the resistance of the bourgeoisie. "Social" parsons and opportunists are always ready to dream about the future peaceful Socialism; but the very thing that distinguishes them from revolutionary Social-Democrats is that they refuse to think about and reflect on the fierce class struggle and class wars that are necessary for the achievement of this beautiful future.

We must not allow ourselves to be led astray by words. The term "defence of the fatherland," for instance, is hateful to many, because the avowed opportunists and the Kautskyites use it to cover up and gloss over the lies of the bourgeoisie in the *present* predatory war. This is a fact. It does not follow from this, however, that we must forget to ponder over the meaning of political slogans. Recognizing "defence of the fatherland" in the present war is nothing more nor less than recognizing it as a "just" war, a war in the interests of the proletariat—nothing more nor less, we repeat, because invasions may occur in any war. It would be simply foolish to repudiate "defence of the fatherland" *on the part of* the oppressed nations in their wars *against* the imperialist Great Powers, or on the part of a victorious proletariat in *its* war against some Gallifet of a bourgeois state.

Theoretically, it would be quite wrong to forget that every war is but the continuation of politics by other means; the present imperialist war is the continuation of the imperialist politics of two groups of Great Powers, and these politics were engendered and fostered by the sum total

of the relationships of the imperialist epoch. But this very epoch must also necessarily engender and foster the politics of struggle against national oppression and of the proletarian struggle against the bourgeoisie, and therefore, also the possibility and the inevitability, first, of revolutionary national rebellions and wars; second, of proletarian wars and rebellions *against* the bourgeoisie; and, third, of a combination of both kinds of revolutionary war, etc.

## II

To this must be added the following general considerations.

An oppressed class which does not strive to learn to use arms, to acquire arms, only deserves to be treated like slaves. We cannot forget, unless we become bourgeois pacifists or opportunists, that we are living in a class society, that there is no way out of this society, and there can be none, except by means of the class struggle. In every class society, whether it is based on slavery, serfdom, or, as at present, on wage labour, the oppressing class is armed. Not only the modern standing army, but even the modern militia—even in the most democratic bourgeois republics, Switzerland, for example—represent the bourgeoisie armed *against* the proletariat. This is such an elementary truth that it is hardly necessary to dwell upon it. It is sufficient to recall the use of troops against strikers in all capitalist countries.

The fact that the bourgeoisie is armed against the proletariat is one of the biggest, most fundamental, and most important facts in modern capitalist society. And in face of this fact, revolutionary Social-Democrats are urged to "demand" "disarmament"! This is tantamount to the complete abandonment of the point of view of the class struggle, the renunciation of all thought of revolution. Our slogan must be: the arming of the proletariat for the purpose of

vanquishing, expropriating and disarming the bourgeoisie. These are the only tactics a revolutionary class can adopt, tactics which follow logically from the whole *objective development* of capitalist militarism, and dictated by that development. Only *after* the proletariat has disarmed the bourgeoisie will it be able, without betraying its world-historical mission, to throw all armaments on the scrap heap; and the proletariat will undoubtedly do this, but *only when this condition has been fulfilled, certainly not before.*

If the present war rouses among the reactionary Christian Socialists, among the whimpering petty bourgeoisie, *only* horror and fright, only aversion to all use of arms, to bloodshed, death, etc., then we must say: capitalist society is always an *endless horror*. And if this most reactionary of all wars is now preparing a *horrible end* for that society, we have no reason to drop into despair. At a time when, as everyone can see, the bourgeoisie itself is paving the way for the only legitimate and revolutionary war, namely, civil war against the imperialist bourgeoisie, the "demand" for disarmament, or more correctly, the dream of disarmament, is, objectively, nothing but an expression of despair.

Those who will say that this is a theory divorced from life, we will remind of two world-historical facts: the role of trusts and the employment of women in industry, on the one hand; and the Paris Commune of 1871 and the December uprising of 1905 in Russia, on the other.

The business of the bourgeoisie is to promote trusts, to drive women and children into the factories, to torture them there, to corrupt them, to condemn them to extreme poverty. We do not "demand" such a development. We do not "support" it; we fight it. But *how* do we fight? We know that trusts and the employment of women in industry are progressive. We do not want to go back to the

handicraft system, to premonopolistic capitalism, to domestic drudgery for women. Forward through the trusts, etc., and beyond them to Socialism!

This argument, is, with the necessary changes, applicable also to the present militarization of the people. Today the imperialist bourgeoisie militarizes not only the adults, but also the youth. Tomorrow, it may proceed to militarize the women. To this we must say: All the better! Go ahead faster! The faster it goes, the nearer shall we be to the armed uprising against capitalism. How can Social-Democrats allow themselves to be frightened by the militarization of the youth, etc., if they have not forgotten the example of the Paris Commune? This is not a "theory divorced from life," it is not a dream, but a fact. It would be very bad indeed if, notwithstanding all the economic and political facts, Social-Democrats began to doubt that the imperialist epoch and imperialist wars must inevitably bring about a repetition of such facts.

A certain bourgeois observer of the Paris Commune, writing to an English newspaper in May 1871, said: "If the French nation consisted entirely of women, what a terrible nation it would be!" Women, and children of thirteen and upwards, fought in the Paris Commune side by side with the men. Nor can it be different in the forthcoming battles for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie. The proletarian women will not look on passively while the well-armed bourgeoisie shoot down the poorly-armed or unarmed workers. They will take to arms as they did in 1871, and from the cowed nations of today—or more correctly, from the present-day working-class movement, which is disorganized more by the opportunists than by the governments—there will undoubtedly arise, sooner or later, but with absolute certainty, an international league of the "terrible nations" of the revolutionary proletariat.

Militarism is now permeating the whole of social life. Imperialism is a fierce struggle of the Great Powers for

the division and redivision of the world—therefore, it must inevitably lead to further militarization in all countries, even in the neutral and small countries. What will the proletarian women do against it? Only curse all war and everything military, only demand disarmament? The women of an oppressed class that is really revolutionary will never consent to play such a shameful role. They will say to their sons: "You will soon be a man. You will be given a gun. Take it and learn the military art. The proletarians need this knowledge not to shoot your brothers, the workers of other countries, as they are doing in the present war, and as you are being told to do by the traitors to Socialism, but to fight the bourgeoisie of your own country, to put an end to exploitation, poverty and war, not by means of good intentions, but by vanquishing the bourgeoisie and by disarming it."

If we are to refrain from conducting such propaganda, precisely such propaganda, in connection with the present war, then we had better stop using highfalutin phrases about international revolutionary Social-Democracy, about the socialist revolution, and about war against war.

### III

The advocates of disarmament oppose the point in the program about the "armed nation" for the reason, among others, that this demand, they allege, easily leads to concessions to opportunism. We have examined above the most important point, namely, the relation of disarmament to the class struggle and to the social revolution. We will now examine the relation between the demand for disarmament and opportunism. One of the most important reasons why this demand is unacceptable is precisely that it, and the illusions it creates, inevitably weaken and devitalize our struggle against opportunism.

Undoubtedly this struggle is the main question imme-

diately confronting the International. A struggle against imperialism that is not closely linked up with the struggle against opportunism is an idle phrase, or a fraud. One of the main defects of Zimmerwald and Kienthal,<sup>72</sup> one of the main reasons why these embryos of the Third International may possibly end in a fiasco, is that the question of the struggle against opportunism was not even raised openly, much less decided in the sense of proclaiming the necessity of a rupture with the opportunists. Opportunism has triumphed—temporarily—in the European working-class movement. Two main shades of opportunism have arisen in all the big countries: first, the avowed, cynical, and therefore less dangerous social-imperialism of Messrs. Plekhanov, Scheidemann, Legien, Albert Thomas and Sembat, Vandervelde, Hyndman, Henderson, *et al*; second, the concealed, Kautskyite opportunism: Kautsky-Haase and the Social-Democratic Labour Group in Germany; Longuet, Pressmane, Mayeras, *et al*, in France; Ramsay MacDonald and the other leaders of the Independent Labour Party in England; Martov, Chkheidze and others in Russia; Treves and the other so-called Left reformists in Italy.

Avowed opportunism is openly and directly opposed to revolution and to the incipient revolutionary movements and outbursts, and is in direct alliance with the governments, varied as the forms of this alliance may be: from participation in Cabinets to participation in the War Industries Committee (in Russia). The masked opportunists, the Kautskyites, are much more harmful and dangerous to the working-class movement, because they hide their advocacy of an alliance with the former under a cloak of plausible, pseudo-“Marxist” catchwords and pacifist slogans. The fight against both these forms of prevailing opportunism must be conducted in *all* fields of proletarian politics: parliament, trade unions, strikes, military affairs, etc. The main distinguishing feature of *both* these forms of prevail-

ing opportunism is that the concrete question of the *connection between the present war and revolution and other concrete questions of revolution* is hushed up, concealed, or treated with an eye to police prohibitions. And this is done, notwithstanding the fact that before the war the connection between precisely *this* war that was impending and the proletarian revolution was pointed to innumerable times, both unofficially, and in the Basle Manifesto officially. The main defect in the demand for disarmament is its evasion of all the concrete questions of revolution. Or do the advocates of disarmament stand for a perfectly new species of unarmed revolution?

To proceed. We are by no means opposed to the fight for reforms. We do not wish to ignore the sad possibility that humanity may—if the worst comes to the worst—go through a second imperialist war, if, in spite of the numerous outbursts of mass unrest and mass discontent, and in spite of our efforts, revolution does not come out of the present war. We are in favour of a program of reforms which is *also* directed against the opportunists. The opportunists would be only too glad if we left the struggle for reforms entirely to them, and, saving ourselves by flight from sad reality, sought shelter in the heights above the clouds in some sort of “disarmament.” “Disarmament” means simply running away from unpleasant reality and not fighting against it.

In such a program we would say something like this: “The slogan and the recognition of defence of the fatherland in the imperialist war of 1914-16 is only a means of corrupting the working-class movement with the aid of a bourgeois lie.” Such a concrete reply to concrete questions would be theoretically more correct, much more useful to the proletariat and more unbearable to the opportunists, than the demand for disarmament and the repudiation of all “defence of the fatherland.” And we might add: “The bourgeoisie of all the imperialist Great Powers—England,



France, Germany, Austria, Russia, Italy, Japan, the United States—has become so reactionary and so imbued with the striving for world domination, that *any* war conducted by *the bourgeoisie of those countries* can be nothing but reactionary. The proletariat must not only oppose all such wars, but it must also wish for the defeat of its 'own' government in such wars and utilize it for revolutionary insurrection, if an insurrection to prevent the war proves unsuccessful."

On the question of a militia, we should have said: We are not in favour of a bourgeois militia; we are in favour only of a proletarian militia. Therefore, "not a penny, not a man," not only for a standing army, but even for a bourgeois militia, even in countries like the United States, or Switzerland, Norway, etc.; the more so that in the freest republican countries (e.g., Switzerland), we see that the militia is being more and more Prussianized, particularly in 1907 and 1911, and prostituted by being mobilized against strikers. We can demand election of officers by the people, abolition of all military law, equal rights for foreign and native-born workers (a point particularly important for those imperialist states which, like Switzerland, more and more blatantly exploit increasing numbers of foreign workers while refusing to grant them rights); further, the right of every hundred, say, of the inhabitants of the given country to form voluntary military training associations, with free election of instructors, who are to be paid by the state, etc. Only under such conditions could the proletariat acquire military training really for *itself* and not for its slaveowners; and the need for such training is imperatively dictated by the interests of the proletariat. The Russian revolution showed that every success of the revolutionary movement, even a partial success like the seizure of a certain city, a certain factory village, a certain section of the army—inevitably *compels* the victorious proletariat to carry out just such a program.

Finally, it goes without saying that opportunism cannot be fought merely by means of programs; it can be fought only by constant vigilance to see that they are really carried out. The greatest, the fatal error the bankrupt Second International committed was that its words did not correspond to its deeds, that it acquired the habit of hypocrisy and shameless revolutionary phrasemongering (note the present attitude of Kautsky and Co. towards the Basle Manifesto). Disarmament as a social idea, i.e., an idea that springs from a certain social environment and which can affect a certain social environment—and is not merely a cranky notion of an individual—has evidently sprung from the exceptionally “tranquil” conditions of life prevailing in certain small states which for a rather long time have stood aside from the bloody world highway of war and hope to stay aside. To be convinced of this, it is sufficient, for instance, to ponder over the arguments advanced by the Norwegian advocates of disarmament. “We are a small country,” they say. “We have a small army, we can do nothing against the Great Powers” (and are, therefore, also powerless to resist being forcibly drawn into an imperialist *alliance* with one or the other group of Great Powers) . . . “We want to be left in peace in our remote corner and continue to conduct our parochial politics, to demand disarmament, compulsory courts of arbitration, permanent neutrality, etc.” (“permanent” after the Belgian fashion, no doubt?).

The petty striving of petty states to stand aside, the petty-bourgeois desire to keep as far away as possible from the great battles of world history, to take advantage of one’s relatively monopolistic position in order to remain in hidebound passivity—this is the *objective* social environment which may ensure the disarmament idea a certain degree of success and a certain degree of popularity in some of the small states. Of course, this striving is reactionary and entirely based on illusions; for in one way or

another, imperialism draws the small states into the vortex of world economy and world politics.

In Switzerland, for example, the imperialist environment objectively prescribes *two* lines to the working-class movement: the opportunists, in alliance with the bourgeoisie, are trying to convert Switzerland into a republican-democratic monopolistic federation for obtaining profits from imperialist bourgeois tourists and to make this "tranquil" monopolistic position as profitable and as tranquil as possible.

The genuine Social-Democrats of Switzerland are striving to take advantage of the comparative freedom of Switzerland and its "international" situation to help the close alliance of the revolutionary elements of the workers' parties in Europe to achieve victory. Switzerland, thank God, has not "a separate language of its own" but three world languages, precisely those that are spoken by the adjacent belligerent countries.

If the twenty thousand members of the Swiss party were to pay a weekly levy of two centimes as a sort of "extra war tax," we would have about twenty thousand francs per annum, a sum more than sufficient to enable us periodically to publish in three languages and to distribute among the workers and soldiers of the belligerent countries—in spite of the ban of the General Staffs—all the material containing the truth about the incipient revolt of the workers, about their fraternizing in the trenches, about their hope to use their arms in a revolutionary manner against the imperialist bourgeoisie of their "own" countries, etc.

All this is not new. This is exactly what is being done by the best papers, like *La Sentinelle*, *Volksrecht* and the *Berner Tagwacht*, although, unfortunately, not on a sufficiently large scale. Only by such activity can the splendid decision of the Aarau Party Congress<sup>73</sup> become something more than merely a splendid decision.

The question that interests us now is: Does the demand for disarmament correspond to the revolutionary trend among the Swiss Social-Democrats? Obviously not. Objectively, "disarmament" is an extremely national, a specifically national program of small states; it is certainly not the international program of international revolutionary Social-Democracy.

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## LETTERS FROM AFAR

### FIRST LETTER

#### THE FIRST STAGE OF THE FIRST REVOLUTION

The first revolution to be engendered by the imperialist World War has broken out. This first revolution will certainly not be the last.

Judging by the scanty information available in Switzerland, the first stage of this first revolution, namely, of the *Russian* revolution of March 1, 1917, has ended. This first stage will certainly not be the last stage of our revolution.

How could such a "miracle" have happened, that in only eight days—the period mentioned by Mr. Milyukov in his boastful telegram to all Russia's representatives abroad—there should have collapsed a monarchy that had maintained itself for centuries, and that in spite of everything managed to maintain itself throughout the tremendous, nation-wide class battles of the three years 1905-07?

Miracles do not happen in nature and history, but every abrupt turn in history, and this applies to every revolution, presents such wealth of content, unfolds such unexpected and specific combinations of the forms of struggle and the alignment of forces of the contestants, that to the lay mind there is much that must appear miraculous.

For the tsarist monarchy to have collapsed in a few days the combination of a number of factors of world-historic importance was required. We shall mention the chief of them.

Without the tremendous class battles and the revolutionary energy displayed by the Russian proletariat during the three years 1905-07, the second revolution could not possibly have been so rapid in the sense that its *initial stage* was completed in a few days. The first revolution (1905) deeply ploughed the soil, uprooted age-old prejudices, awakened millions of workers and tens of millions of peasants to political life and political struggles and revealed *all classes* (and all the principal parties) of Russian society to each other—and to the world—in their true character and in the true alignment of their interests, their forces, their modes of action, and their immediate and ultimate aims. This first revolution, and the succeeding period of counterrevolution (1907-14), laid bare the very essence of the tsarist monarchy, brought it to the “utmost limit,” exposed the whole rottenness and infamy, the cynicism and dissoluteness of the tsar’s gang, headed by that monster, Rasputin; it exposed the bestiality of the Romanov family, those pogrom-mongers, who have drenched Russia in the blood of Jews, workers and revolutionaries—those *landlords*, “first among peers,” *who own millions* of dessiatines of land and are ready to stoop to any brutality, to any crimes, to ruin and strangle any number of citizens in order to preserve the “sacred right of property” for themselves *and their class*.

Without the Revolution of 1905-07 and the counter-revolution of 1907-14, that precise “self-determination” of all classes of the Russian people and of the nations inhabiting Russia, that determination of the relation of these classes to each other and to the tsarist monarchy, which manifested itself during the eight days of the February-March Revolution of 1917 would have been impossible. This eight-day revolution was “performed,” if we may express ourselves metaphorically, as though after a dozen major and minor rehearsals; the “actors” knew each other, their parts, their places, and their setting

in every detail, through and through, down to every more or less important shade of political trend and mode of action.

But while the first great Revolution of 1905, which Messrs. the Guchkovs and Milyukovs and their hangers-on branded as a "great mutiny," led, after the lapse of a dozen years, to the "brilliant," the "glorious" revolution of 1917—which the Guchkovs and Milyukovs proclaim to be "glorious" because it has put them in power (*for the time being*)—it still required a great, mighty and all-powerful "stage manager," capable, on the one hand, of vastly accelerating the course of world history and, on the other, of engendering world-wide crises of unparalleled intensity—economic, political, national and international. Apart from an extraordinary acceleration of world history, it was also required that history should make particularly abrupt turns, in order that at one of these turns the filthy and blood-stained cart of the Romanov monarchy should be *abruptly* overturned.

This all-powerful "stage manager," this mighty accelerator was the imperialist World War.

It is now indisputable that it is a world war, for the United States and China are already half-drawn into it today, and will be fully drawn into it tomorrow.

It is now indisputable that it is an imperialist war on *both* sides. Only the capitalists and their hangers-on, the social-patriots and social-chauvinists—or if instead of general critical definitions we use political names familiar in Russia—only the Guchkovs and Lvovs, Milyukovs and Shingarevs on the one hand, and only the Gvozdyovs, Potresovs, Chkhenkelis, Kerenskys and Chkheidzes on the other, can deny or gloss over this fact. *Both* the German and the Anglo-French bourgeoisie are waging the war for the plunder of foreign countries and the strangling of small nations, for financial supremacy over the world and the division and redivision of colonies, and in order to save the totter-

ing capitalist regime by fooling and sowing dissension among the workers of the various countries.

The imperialist war was bound, with objective inevitability, to accelerate immensely and intensify the class struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie to an unprecedented degree; it was bound to turn into a civil war between the hostile classes.

This *transformation was started* by the February-March Revolution of 1917, the first stage of which was marked, firstly, by a joint blow at tsarism struck by two forces: on the one hand, by the whole of bourgeois and landlord Russia, with all its unconscious hangers-on and all its conscious leaders, the British and French ambassadors and capitalists, and on the other, *by the Soviet of Workers' Deputies*, which began to win over the soldiers' and peasants' deputies.

These three political camps, these three fundamental political forces—1) the tsarist monarchy, the head of the feudal landlords, of the old bureaucracy and the military caste; 2) bourgeois and landlord-Octoberist-Cadet Russia, behind which trailed the petty bourgeoisie (the principal representatives of which are Kerensky and Chkheidze); 3) the Soviet of Workers' Deputies, which is seeking to make the entire proletariat and the entire mass of the poorest part of the population its allies—these three *principal* political forces became fully and clearly revealed even in the eight days of the “first stage” and even to an observer so remote from the scene of events and obliged to content himself with the meagre dispatches of foreign newspapers as the writer of these lines.

But, before speaking of this in greater detail, I must return to that part of my letter which is devoted to a factor of prime importance, namely, the imperialist World War.

The war shackled the belligerent powers, the belligerent groups of capitalists, the “bosses” of the capitalist system,



the slaveowners of the capitalist slave system, to each other with *chains of iron*. One bloody clot—such is the social and political life of the present moment in history.

The Socialists who deserted to the side of the bourgeoisie on the outbreak of the war—all the Davids and Scheidemanns in Germany and the Plekhanovs, Potressovs, Gvozdyovs and Co. in Russia—clamoured loud and long against the “illusions” of the revolutionaries, against the “illusions” of the Basle Manifesto, against the “farcical dream” of transforming the imperialist war into a civil war. They sang praises in every key to the strength, tenacity and adaptability allegedly revealed by capitalism—they, who had aided the capitalists to “adapt,” tame, fool and disunite the working classes of the various countries!

But “he who laughs last laughs best.” The bourgeoisie have been unable to delay the revolutionary crisis engendered by the war for long. The crisis is growing with irresistible force in all countries, beginning with Germany, which, according to an observer who recently visited that country, is suffering “brilliantly organized starvation,” and ending with England and France, where *starvation is also* looming, but where organization is far less “brilliant.”

It was natural that the revolutionary crisis should have broken out *first of all* in tsarist Russia, where disorganization was most appalling and the proletariat most revolutionary (not by virtue of any specific qualities, but because of the living traditions of 1905). This crisis was hastened by the series of extremely severe defeats that Russia and her allies sustained. These defeats entirely dislocated the old machinery of government and the old order and roused the anger of *all* classes of the population against them; they enraged the army, wiped out on a vast scale the old commanding personnel, which was of a diehard-aristocratic and exceptionally rotten bureaucratic character, and replaced it by a young, fresh, mainly bourgeois, plebeian, petty-bourgeois commanding personnel. These people who,

positively grovelling to the bourgeoisie or simply lacking backbone, howled and wailed about "defeatism," are now faced by the fact of the historical connection between the defeat of the most backward and barbarous tsarist monarchy and the *beginning* of the revolutionary conflagration.

But while the defeats in the early part of the war were a negative factor that hastened the upheaval, the *connection* between Anglo-French finance capital, Anglo-French imperialism, with Russian Octobrist-Cadet capital was a factor that hastened this crisis by the downright *organization of a plot* against Nicholas Romanov.

This highly important aspect of the situation is, for obvious reasons, hushed up by the Anglo-French press, but is maliciously emphasized by the German. We Marxists must soberly face the truth and not allow ourselves to be confused either by the lies, the official sugary diplomatic and Ministerial lies of the first group of imperialist belligerents, or by the sniggering and smirking of its financial and military rivals of the other belligerent group. The whole course of events in the February-March Revolution clearly shows that the British and French embassies, with their agents and "connections," who had long been making the most desperate efforts to prevent "separate" agreements and a separate peace between Nicholas II (and last, we hope, and we will endeavour to make him that) and Wilhelm II, directly organized a plot in conjunction with the Octobrists and Cadets, in conjunction with a section of the generals and the commanding personnel of the army and the St. Petersburg garrison, especially with the object of *deposing* Nicholas Romanov.

Let us not harbour any illusions. Let us not make the mistake of those who—like certain "O.C-ists" or "Mensheviks" who are oscillating between Gvozdyov-Potresovism and internationalism and only too often slip into petty-bourgeois pacifism—are now ready to sing the praises of an "agreement" between the workers' party and the Ca-

dets, of "support" of the latter by the former, etc. In conformity with the old (certainly non-Marxian) doctrine that they have learned by rote, they threw a veil over the plot organized by the Anglo-French imperialists with the Guchkovs and Milyukovs with the object of deposing the "chief warrior" Nicholas Romanov and putting more energetic, fresh and more capable *warriors* in his place.

That the revolution succeeded so quickly and—seemingly, at the first superficial glance—so radically is only due to the fact that, as a result of an extremely unique historical situation, *absolutely dissimilar currents, absolutely heterogeneous class interests, absolutely contrary political and social strivings have merged*, and in a strikingly "harmonious" manner, namely: the conspiracy of the Anglo-French imperialists, who impelled Milyukov, Guchkov and Co. to seize power *for the purpose of continuing the imperialist war*, for the purpose of conducting the war still more ferociously and obstinately, for the purpose of *slaughtering fresh millions* of Russian workers and peasants in order that the Guchkovs might obtain Constantinople, the French capitalists Syria, the British capitalists Mesopotamia, and so on. This on the one hand. On the other, there was a profound proletarian and mass popular movement of a revolutionary character (a movement of the entire poorest section of the population of town and country) for *bread, for peace, for real freedom*.

It would simply be foolish to talk about the revolutionary proletariat of Russia "supporting" the Cadet-Oktoberist imperialism that has been "botched up" with English money and is as abominable as tsarist imperialism. The revolutionary workers have destroyed, have already destroyed to a considerable degree and will destroy to its foundations, the infamous tsarist *monarchy*, neither elated nor dismayed by the fact that at certain brief and exceptional historical conjunctures *they were aided* by the struggle of Buchanan, Guchkov, Milyukov and Co. to replace one

monarch by *another monarch*, also preferably a Romanov!

Such, and only such, is the way the situation developed. Such, and only such is the view that can be taken by a politician who does not fear the truth, who soberly weighs the balance of social forces in the revolution, who appraises every "current situation" not only from the point of view of all its present, current peculiarities, but also from the point of view of the deeper-lying springs, the deeper relation between the interests of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, both in Russia and throughout the world.

The workers of Petrograd, like the workers of the whole of Russia, self-sacrificingly fought against the tsarist monarchy—fought for freedom, land for the peasants, and *for peace*, as against the imperialist slaughter. In order to continue and intensify that slaughter Anglo-French imperialist capital hatched court intrigues, conspired with the officers of the Guards, incited and encouraged the Guchkovs and Milyukovs, and fixed up a *complete new government*, which in fact *did seize power* after the proletarian struggle had struck the first blows at tsarism.

This new government in which the Octobrists and "mirno-obnovlentsi," yesterday's abettors of Stolypin the Hangman, of Lvov and Guchkov, occupy *really important* posts, vital posts, decisive posts, the army and the bureaucracy—this government, in which Milyukov and the other Cadets are decorations more than anything, a signboard, they are there to deliver sentimental professorial speeches, and in which the "Trudovik" Kerensky plays the part of a balalaika to deceive the workers and peasants—this government is not a fortuitous assemblage of persons.

They are representatives of the new class that has risen to political power in Russia, the class of capitalist landlords and bourgeoisie which has long been *ruling* our country economically, and which during the Revolution of 1905-07, during the counterrevolutionary period of 1907-14,

and finally—and with especial rapidity—during the war period of 1914-17, organized itself politically with extreme rapidity, taking into its hands the control of the local government bodies, public education, conventions of every type, the Duma, the War Industry Committees, etc. This new class was already “almost completely” in power by 1917, and therefore the first blows dealt at tsarism were sufficient to bring the latter to the ground and clear the way for the bourgeoisie. The imperialist war, which required an incredible exertion of effort, so accelerated the course of development of backward Russia that we have “at one blow” (or rather as it *seemed* at one blow) *caught up* with Italy, England, and almost with France; we have obtained a “coalition,” a “national” (i.e., adapted for carrying on the imperialist slaughter and for fooling the people), a “parliamentary” government.

Side by side with this government—which as regards the *present* war is but the agent of the billion-dollar “firm,” “England and France”—there has arisen the chief, unofficial, undeveloped and as yet comparatively weak *workers’ government*, which expresses the interests of the proletariat and of the entire poorest section of the urban and rural population. This is the *Soviet of Workers’ Deputies* in Petrograd which is seeking connections with the soldiers and peasants, and also with the agricultural workers, with the latter particularly and primarily, of course, more than with the peasants.

Such is the *actual* political situation, which we must first endeavour to define with the greatest possible objective precision, in order that Marxist tactics may be based upon the only solid foundation upon which they can be based—the foundation of *facts*.

The tsarist monarchy has been smashed, but not finally destroyed.

The Octobrist-Cadet bourgeois government, which desires to fight the imperialist war “to a finish,” is in reality

the agent of the financial firm "England and France," is *obliged to promise* the people the maximum of liberties and sops compatible with the maintenance of its power over the people and the possibility of continuing the imperialist slaughter.

The Soviet of Workers' Deputies is an organization of the workers, the embryo of a workers' government, the representative of the interests of the entire mass of the *poorest* section of the population, i.e., of nine-tenths of the population, which is striving for *peace, bread and freedom*.

The conflict of these three forces determines the situation as it exists at present, which is *transitional* from the first stage of the revolution to the second.

The antagonism between the first and second force is *not* profound, it is temporary, created *only* by the circumstances of the moment, by the abrupt turn of events in the imperialist war. The *whole* of the new government is monarchist, for Kerensky's *verbal* republicanism simply cannot be taken seriously, is not worthy of a statesman, *objectively* is political chicanery. The new government has not managed to give the tsarist monarch the finishing stroke, but it has already *begun to strike a bargain* with the landlord Romanov dynasty. The bourgeoisie of the Octobrist-Cadet type *needs* a monarch to serve as the head of the bureaucracy and the army to protect the privileges of capital from the working people.

Whoever says that the workers must *support* the new government in the interests of the struggle against the reaction of tsarism (and apparently this is being said by the Potressovs, Gvozdyovs, Chkhenkelis and also, all *evasiveness* notwithstanding, by Chkheidze), is a traitor to the workers, a traitor to the proletariat, to the cause of peace and freedom. For actually, *precisely* this new government is *already* bound hand and foot by imperialist capital, by the imperialist policy of *war* and plunder, has *already* begun

to strike a bargain (without consulting the people!) with the dynasty, *is already working to restore the tsarist monarchy*, is already soliciting the candidature of Mikhail Romanov as the new kinglet, is already taking measures to stabilize his throne, to substitute for the legitimate (lawful, ruling by virtue of the old law) monarchy a Bonapartist, plebiscite monarchy (ruling by virtue of a fraudulent plebiscite).

No, in order that a real struggle may be waged against the tsarist monarchy, in order that freedom may be guaranteed in fact and not merely in words, in the glib promises of Milyukov and Kerensky, the workers must *not* support the new government, but this government must "support" the workers! For the only *guarantee* of freedom and of the complete destruction of tsarism lies in *arming the proletariat*, in strengthening, extending and developing the role, significance, and power of the Soviet of Workers' Deputies.

All the rest is mere phrasemongering and lies, self-deception on the part of the politicians of the liberal and radical camp, fraudulent trickery.

Help, or at least do not hinder, the arming of the workers, and freedom in Russia will be invincible, the monarchy irrestorable, the republic secure.

Otherwise the Guchkovs and Milyukovs will restore the monarchy and grant *none*, absolutely none of the "liberties" they promised. All bourgeois politicians in *all* bourgeois revolutions "fed" the people and fooled the workers with promises.

Our revolution is a bourgeois revolution, *therefore*, the workers must support the bourgeoisie, say the Potressovs, Gvozdyovs, and Chkheidzes, as Plekhanov said yesterday.

Our revolution is a bourgeois revolution, say we, the Marxists, and *therefore* the workers must open the eyes of the people to the deception practised by the bourgeois politicians, teach them not to trust in words, to depend

entirely on their *own* strength, on their *own* organization, on their *own* unity, and on their *own weapons*.

The government of the Octobrists and Cadets, of the Guchkovs and Milyukovs, *cannot*, even if it sincerely wanted to (only infants can think that Guchkov and Lvov are sincere), *cannot* give the people *either peace, or bread, or freedom*.

It cannot give peace because it is a war government, a government for the continuation of the imperialist slaughter, a government of *plunder*, which wants to plunder Armenia, Galicia and Turkey, to annex Constantinople, to reconquer Poland, Courland, Lithuania, etc. This government is bound hand and foot by Anglo-French imperialist capital. Russian capital is merely a branch of the world-wide "firm" which manipulates *hundreds of billions* of rubles and is called "England and France."

It cannot give bread because it is a bourgeois government. *At best*, it can give the people "brilliantly organized starvation," as Germany did. But the people will not tolerate starvation. The people will learn, and probably very soon, that there is bread and it can be obtained, but only by methods that *do not respect the sanctity of capital and landownership*.

It cannot give freedom because it is a landlord and capitalist government which *fears* the people and has already begun to strike a bargain with the Romanov dynasty.

We shall deal in another article with the tactical problems of our immediate attitude towards this government. We shall there show wherein lies the peculiarity of the present situation, which is a *transition* from the first stage of the revolution to the second, and why the slogan, the "task of the day," at *this* moment must be: *Workers, you have displayed marvels of proletarian heroism, the heroism of the people, in the civil war against tsardom. You must display marvels of organization, organization of the pro-*



*letariat and of the whole people, in order to prepare the way for your victory in the second stage of the revolution.*

Confining ourselves for the *present* to an analysis of the class struggle and the alignment of class forces at this stage of the revolution, we have still to put the question: who are the *allies* of the proletariat in *this* revolution?

It has *two* allies: first, the broad mass of the semiproletarian and partly also of the small-peasant population of Russia, who number scores of millions and constitute the overwhelming majority of the population. For this mass, peace, bread, freedom and land are *essential*. It is inevitable that this mass will to a certain extent be under the influence of the bourgeoisie, particularly of the petty bourgeoisie, to which it is most akin in its conditions of life, vacillating between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The cruel lessons of war, which will be *the more* cruel the more vigorously the war is prosecuted by Guchkov, Lvov, Milyukov and Co., will *inevitably* push this mass towards the proletariat, compel it to follow the proletariat. We must now take advantage of the relative freedom of the new order and of the Soviets of Workers' Deputies to strive to *enlighten* and *organize* this mass first of all and above all. Soviets of Peasants' Deputies and Soviets of Agricultural Workers—that is one of our most urgent tasks. In this connection our endeavour will be not only that the agricultural workers should establish their own separate Soviets, but that the propertyless and poorest peasants should organize separately from the well-to-do peasants. The special tasks and special forms of organization urgently needed at the present time will be dealt with in the next letter.

Second, the ally of the Russian proletariat is the proletariat of all the belligerent countries and of all countries in general. At present this ally is to a large degree repressed by the war, and it is the social-chauvinists in Europe, who, like Plekhanov, Gvozdyov and Potressov in Rus-

sia, have deserted to the bourgeoisie, who, all too often, speak in its name. But the liberation of the proletariat from their influence has progressed with every month of the imperialist war, and the Russian revolution will *inevitably* hasten this process to an immense degree.

With these two allies, the proletariat, *utilizing the peculiarities* of the present state of transition, can and will proceed, first, to the achievement of a democratic republic and the complete victory of the peasantry over the landlords and the Guchkov-Milyukov semimonarchy, and then to *Socialism*, which alone can give the war-weary people *peace, bread and freedom*.

N. LENIN

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V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*,  
Fourth Russian Edition,  
Vol. XXIII, pp. 291-301

## EXPLANATORY NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> *Osvobozhdeniye (Liberation)*, a fortnightly journal of the liberal-monarchist bourgeoisie; published abroad in 1902-05 under the editorship of P. B. Struve. The followers of *Osvobozhdeniye* later made up the core of the Cadet Party, the principal bourgeois party in Russia. p. 13
- <sup>2</sup> *Economism*, an opportunist trend that arose in the Russian Social-Democratic movement at the end of the 90's of the nineteenth century. The Economists (Akimov, Martynov, and others) asserted that the task of the working class was to wage the economic struggle against the employers; the political struggle against the autocracy, however, was the business of the liberal bourgeoisie, whom the working class must support. The tenets of the Economists were "a desertion of Marxism, a denial of the necessity for an independent political party of the working class, an attempt to convert the working class into a political appendage of the bourgeoisie" (*History of the C.P.S.U.[B.]*, *Short Course*, Moscow 1949, p. 27). p. 13
- <sup>3</sup> *The Bulygin Commission*, formed by order of the tsar in February 1905. Its chairman was A. G. Bulygin, then Minister of the Interior. The commission drafted a bill for the institution of an advisory State Duma and the regulations governing the elections to the proposed Duma. The bill and the regulations were published together with the tsar's manifesto of August 6 (19), 1905. The Bolsheviks proclaimed an active boycott of the Bulygin Duma. The government failed to convene the Duma; it was swept away by the force of the revolution. p. 16
- <sup>4</sup> *Millerandism*, an opportunist trend named after the French "Socialist" Millerand who in 1899 entered the reactionary bour-

geois government of France and assisted the bourgeoisie to carry out its policy. p. 26

- <sup>5</sup> This refers to the events that took place in St. Petersburg on January 9, 1905, when the workers of St. Petersburg, with their wives and children, marched to the Winter Palace to present a petition to the tsar concerning their needs. The peaceful demonstration was fired on by the tsar's troops. The events of January 9 marked the beginning of the 1905 revolution.

p. 29

- <sup>6</sup> A constitution "*à la Shipov*." Lenin here refers to the "constitutional" platform of D. N. Shipov, one of the leaders of the Zemstvo-liberal movement of the '90's and 1900's. The platform provided for the preservation of the tsarist autocracy slightly restricted by a "constitution" to be "granted by the tsar."

p. 34

- <sup>7</sup> "*The Man in the Muffler*," the chief personage in a story by Chekhov bearing this title, typifying the narrow-minded philistine, who fears all innovations, initiative and risk, and stubbornly shuts his eyes to the events and facts of life. p. 52

- <sup>8</sup> Lenin here refers to the following incident: In June 1905, a delegation representing the people active in the Zemstvos was about to be received by the tsar, Nicholas II. Just before the tsar appeared it was discovered that one of the members of the delegation, the liberal Petrunkevich, had no white gloves on. A colonel of the Life Guards who was present took his gloves off and gave them to Petrunkevich.

p. 59

- <sup>9</sup> *Vperyodovtsi*, *Syezdovtsi*, *Proletartsi*—different appellations for the Bolsheviks arising from the fact that they published the newspaper *Vperyod*, that they convened the Third Congress of the Party, and from the name of the newspaper *Proletary*, which began to appear in May 1905 by decision of the Third Congress of the Party.

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- <sup>10</sup> *Bernsteinism*, a trend in international Social-Democracy hostile to Marxism, that arose in Germany at the end of the nineteenth century and took its name from the German Social-Dem-

ocrat Eduard Bernstein. Bernstein set out to revise the revolutionary teachings of Marx on the lines of bourgeois liberalism.

The adherents of Bernstein in Russia were the "legal Marxists," the "Economists," the Bundists and the Mensheviks.

p. 79

- <sup>11</sup> Lenin has in view the program that was issued in 1874 by the London group of Blanquists, ex-members of the Paris Commune (see the article by F. Engels, "Émigré Literature. II. The Program of the Blanquist Émigrés from the Commune").

The *Blanquists* were the adherents of the French revolutionary Louis August Blanqui (1805-81). The classics of Marxism-Leninism, while regarding Blanqui as an outstanding revolutionary and adherent of Socialism, at the same time criticized him for his sectarianism and conspiratorial methods of activity. "Blanquism," wrote Lenin, "is a theory that repudiates the class struggle. Blanquism expects the emancipation of mankind from wage slavery to be brought about not by means of the class struggle of the proletariat but by means of a conspiracy of a small minority of intellectuals" ("The Congress Summed Up," Lenin, *Collected Works*, Fourth Russian Edition, Vol. X, p. 360).

p. 84

- <sup>12</sup> The "Credo." Confession of faith, program, enunciation of world outlook. "Credo" was the name by which became known the manifesto issued in 1899 by a group of Economists (S. N. Prokopovich, E. D. Kuskova, and others who later became Cadets). This manifesto was the most striking expression of the opportunism of Russian Economism. Lenin wrote a trenchant protest denouncing the views of the Economists ("The Protest of Russian Social-Democrats," Lenin, *Collected Works*, Fourth Russian Edition, Vol. IV, pp. 149-63).

p. 101

- <sup>13</sup> The *Hirsch-Duncker trade unions*, founded by the bourgeois liberals Hirsch and Duncker in 1868 in Germany. Hirsch and Duncker, like the bourgeois economist Brentano, preached "harmony of class interests," drew the workers away from the revolutionary class struggle against the bourgeoisie, and restricted the tasks of the trade union movement to those of mutual aid societies and educational clubs.

p. 128

- <sup>14</sup> I.e., Nicholas II, tsar of Russia.

p. 136

- <sup>15</sup> *The Communist League*, the first international organization of the revolutionary proletariat formed in London in the summer of 1847 at a congress of delegates from revolutionary proletarian organizations. The Communist League was organized and directed by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels who, on the instructions of this organization, wrote the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*. The Communist League existed until 1852. Later, the most prominent members of the League played a leading role in the First International. p. 149
- <sup>16</sup> *The Khlestakov new "Iskra."* A reference to Khlestakov, the chief personage in Gogol's comedy "The Inspector General," typifying the unrestrained braggart and liar. p. 151
- <sup>17</sup> *Winter hiring.* The practice of landlords and kulaks to loan money or grain on usurious terms to peasants in the winter, when the latter are in greatest need, the loan being repaid in work on the former's fields. p. 156
- <sup>18</sup> *The Aquarium*, a summer theatre and park in Moscow where, in 1905, revolutionary meetings were usually held. p. 164
- <sup>19</sup> *Dubasov, F. V.*, the Governor General of Moscow who suppressed the armed insurrection in that city in December 1905. p. 164
- <sup>20</sup> *Malakhov*, assistant commander of the troops in the Moscow Military Area at the time of the insurrection in Moscow in December 1905. p. 167
- <sup>21</sup> *Notorious Lettish republics.* This refers to the events in December 1905, when the Latvian towns of Tukums, Talsen, Rouen, Friedrichstadt and others were captured by armed detachments of insurgent workers, agricultural labourers and peasants, and guerilla warfare was commenced against the tsar's troops. In January 1906, the insurrection in Latvia was crushed by the tsarist government. p. 170
- <sup>22</sup> This refers to the mutiny that broke out on July 17, 1906 among the troops of the fortress of Sveaborg. Nearly the whole fortress was in the hands of the mutineers. On July 20, a squadron of the Baltic Fleet compelled the mutineers to sur-

render. On the night of July 19, the sailors of Kronstadt, influenced by the mutiny in Sveaborg, also mutinied, but they too were quickly suppressed. p. 170

- 23 *The Witte Duma*, the first State Duma convened on April 27, 1906 on a franchise drawn up by the Prime Minister S. Y. Witte. On July 8, 1906, this Duma was dispersed by the tsarist government. p. 172

- 24 This refers to an international loan of two billion francs obtained by the tsarist government in the spring of 1906. A large part of the loan was subscribed in France. p. 174

- 25 *Stolichnaya Pochta* (*Metropolitan Post*), a Left Cadet daily newspaper published in St. Petersburg from October 1906 to February 1908. p. 198

- 26 *Vekhi-ists*, from the word "Vekhi" ("Landmarks"), the title of a volume of essays published in 1909 by a group of very prominent Cadet writers. In essays on the Russian intelligentsia these *Vekhi*-ist writers tried to discredit the revolutionary-democratic traditions of the best representatives of the Russian people, including V. G. Belinsky and N. G. Chernyshevsky, vilified the revolutionary movement of 1905, and thanked the tsarist government for having, "with its bayonets and jails," saved the bourgeoisie from "the ire of the people." The writers called upon the intelligentsia to serve the autocracy. V. I. Lenin compared the philosophy and politics of the *Vekhi* program with that of the Black-Hundred newspaper *Moskovskije Vedomosti*, and called the volume of essays an "encyclopedia of liberal renegacy." p. 204

- 27 *Diehards* (the Russian text gives it as "zubri," literally "aurochs"), the appellation applied in political literature to the representatives of the reactionary landed nobility. p. 204

- 28 This refers to Machism (or empirio-criticism), the reactionary, subjectivist and idealist philosophy that appeared in the seventies and eighties of the nineteenth century and is associated with the Austrian physicist and philosopher Mach and

the German philosopher Avenarius. This philosophy was very much "in fashion" in the period of which Lenin is writing.

p. 205

- <sup>29</sup> *Otzovism*, from the Russian word "otozvat," meaning "to recall." This was the name given to an opportunist trend that arose in the ranks of the Bolsheviks in the period of reaction that set in after the defeat of the revolution of 1905-07. The Otzovists demanded the recall of the Social-Democratic deputies in the State Duma and the abandonment of work in the trade unions and other legal working-class organizations.

p. 206

- <sup>30</sup> *Plehve*, V. K., Minister of the Interior and Chief of the Gendarmerie from 1902 to 1904. He waged ruthless war against the revolutionary movement.

p. 209

- <sup>31</sup> *The Party of "Peaceable Renovation"* represented the big commercial and industrial bourgeoisie and the big landlords. It was formed in 1906. Lenin calls it the "party of peaceable depredation."

p. 212

- <sup>32</sup> "*His Majesty's Opposition*," a term used by P. Milyukov, the leader of the Constitutional-Democratic Party (the Cadets). In a speech he delivered at a Lord Mayor's luncheon in London, in June 1909, he said: "As long as there is in Russia a legislative chamber that controls the Budget, the Russian Opposition will remain His Majesty's Opposition and not an opposition to His Majesty."

p. 214

- <sup>33</sup> This resolution was adopted at the Sixth (Prague) Conference of the R.S.D.L.P. (1912) at which the Mensheviks were expelled from the Party and the Bolsheviks constituted themselves an independent Bolshevik Party.

p. 220

- <sup>34</sup> *Pro-Party Mensheviks*, a group of Mensheviks, headed by Plekhanov, who, while in the main retaining their Menshevik position, supported the Bolsheviks on the question of preserving and strengthening the underground proletarian party and dissociated themselves from the Liquidators.

p. 221

- <sup>35</sup> *Pravda* (Truth), a legal, daily, Bolshevik newspaper, began publication in St. Petersburg on April 22 (May 5), 1912. It was



organized and directed by Lenin and Stalin. *Pravda* played an enormously important role in the history of the working-class movement and was a powerful instrument in the hands of the Bolshevik Party in strengthening its organization and gaining influence among the masses. "The *Pravda* of 1912," wrote J. V. Stalin, "was the laying of the cornerstone of the victory of Bolshevism in 1917." The tsarist government repeatedly suppressed the *Pravda*, but with the active support of the advanced workers it continued to appear under different names, such as: *Rabochaya Pravda* (*Workers' Truth*), *Proletarskaya Pravda* (*Proletarian Truth*), etc. In March 1917, after the overthrow of tsarism, *Pravda* became the official organ of the Central Committee and St. Petersburg Committee of the Bolshevik Party. In July-October 1917, persecuted by the bourgeois Provisional Government, it was in a semilegal state and was obliged to change its name several times. It reassumed its original name on November 9, 1917, after the victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution. In March 1918 the publication of the paper was transferred to Moscow and since then it has appeared as the organ of the Central Committee and Moscow Committee of the Bolshevik Party.

*Iuch* (*The Ray*), a legal, daily newspaper of the Menshevik Liquidators published in St. Petersburg from September 1912 to July 1913. p. 222

<sup>36</sup> This refers to the Fourth Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. p. 225

<sup>37</sup> This refers to the plenum of the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. held in Paris in January 1910. p. 227

<sup>38</sup> *Vperyod*-ites, a group of Otzovists (see note 29) who, in 1909, broke away from the Bolshevik Party and published a volume of essays entitled *Vperyod* (*Forward*). p. 227

<sup>39</sup> *An*, the pseudonym of N. Jordania, the leader of the Georgian Mensheviks. p. 232

<sup>40</sup> *October 17*. This refers to October 17, 1905, when the tsar, scared by the revolution, was forced to issue a manifesto proclaiming civil liberties and the convocation of a legislative State Duma. p. 236

- <sup>41</sup> *December 11, 1905*, the date on which the Franchise Act for the election of the First State Duma was promulgated.

*June 3, 1907*, the date on which the Second State Duma was dissolved and a new franchise act for the elections to the Third State Duma was promulgated, ensuring a majority in the Duma for the landlords and capitalists. The tsarist government perfidiously violated its own manifesto of October 17, 1905, and abolished constitutional rights; the Social-Democratic deputies in the Duma were arrested, put on trial and sentenced to penal servitude. This was known as the Third of June *coup d'état*, which marked the temporary triumph of the counterrevolution.

p. 237

- <sup>42</sup> *The Timoshkins*, the reactionary members of the State Duma, of whom the Right-wing deputy Timoshkin was typical.

*Sabler's priests*, the appellation given by Lenin to the priests who, on the instructions of the reactionary Sabler, the Procurator of the Holy Synod, took an active part in the elections for the Fourth State Duma in order to ensure the election of deputies whom the tsarist government considered desirable.

p. 237

- <sup>43</sup> *Pro-Party Bolsheviks*, the name adopted by a small group of conciliators to distinguish themselves from the Leninist Bolsheviks. Lenin called them "inconsistent Trotskyites." Jointly with the Liquidator *Vperyod*-ites, Trotsky, and others, the conciliators waged a fierce struggle against Lenin and opposed the decisions of the Prague Conference.

p. 250

- <sup>44</sup> *Nozdryov*, a quarrelsome and dishonest landlord described in N. V. Gogol's *Dead Souls*.

*Judas Golovlyov*, a mean and hypocritical landlord serf-owner described in M. Saltykov-Shchedrin's *The Golovlyov Family*.

p. 256

- <sup>45</sup> *The Caucasians*, the Liquidators who attended the Conference of the Liquidators (August 1912) as delegates representing the Social-Democratic organization in the Caucasus.

p. 259

- <sup>46</sup> *The seven*, the Menshevik section of the Social-Democratic group in the Fourth State Duma.

p. 259

- 47 *The six*, the Bolshevik section of the Social-Democratic group in the Fourth State Duma. p. 261
- 48 *The summer* or "August" 1913 Conference of the Central Committee and Party workers (termed such for reasons of secrecy) was held in Poronino (in the vicinity of Cracow) from September 22 to October 1, 1913. p. 261
- 49 "*Levitsians*," from the Polish word "Levitsa," meaning "Lefts"—the Left wing of the P.P.S., the petty-bourgeois, nationalist Polish Socialist Party, which in 1906, after the split in the P.P.S., formed an independent faction. On questions of tactics it approximated to the Russian Menshevik Liquidators and, with the latter, fought the Bolsheviks. During the First World War a large section of the "Levitsians" took an internationalist position and drew close to the Polish Social-Democratic Party, with whom, in December 1918, they formed the Communist Workers' Party of Poland. p. 264
- 50 *Biren, E. J.*, a favourite of the Russian Empress Anne. Headed the reactionary reign of terror when she was on the throne (1730-40).  
*Arakcheyev, A. A.*, a reactionary statesman of the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries who greatly influenced domestic and foreign policy during the reigns of Paul I and Alexander I. His name is associated with a long period of unbridled police tyranny and arbitrary rule by the militarists. p. 273
- 51 *The men of December 14*, or *Decembrists*, Russian noblemen revolutionaries who in December 1825 rose in the first open armed rebellion against the tsarist autocracy. p. 273
- 52 *June days*. Reference is to the insurrection of the Paris proletariat in June 1848, brutally suppressed by the French bourgeoisie. p. 274
- 53 "*An\*opposition in the possessive case*." His Majesty's Opposition (see note 32). p. 290

- <sup>54</sup> *Rozanov, V. V.*, contributor to the reactionary newspaper *Novoye Vremya*.  
*Anthony of Volhynia*, Metropolitan of the Russian Orthodox Church, rabid reactionary. p. 291
- <sup>55</sup> Reference is to the shooting by the tsarist troops of the workers of the Lena goldfields in Siberia (April 1912). The workers had struck in protest against brutal exploitation by the management. Workers in all parts of Russia reacted to the Lena shootings by mass political strikes and demonstrations which ushered in a new powerful upsurge of the revolutionary working-class movement. p. 296
- <sup>56</sup> "So it was, so it will be," the words of Minister of the Interior Makarov in reply to a question by the Social-Democratic faction in the State Duma in April 1912, concerning the Lena shootings. p. 304
- <sup>57</sup> "Storming heaven," the expression used by Marx in a letter to Kugelmann of April 12, 1871, in describing the Paris Communards. p. 307
- <sup>58</sup> *February 19, 1861*, the date on which the tsar's manifesto on the abolition of serfdom in Russia was published. p. 312
- <sup>59</sup> *Rosa Luxemburg* (1871-1919), outstanding leader of the Polish and German Social-Democratic movements, one of the founders of the Communist Party of Germany, a passionate revolutionary and tireless champion of the working-class cause. V. I. Lenin had a high regard for the services Rosa Luxemburg had rendered to the international working-class movement, but at the same time he sharply criticized her semi-Menshevik position on a number of important questions of revolutionary Marxism, particularly on the national question. p. 317
- <sup>60</sup> *Rabochaya Pravda*—see note 35. p. 341
- <sup>61</sup> *Proletarskaya Pravda*—see note 35. p. 342

- <sup>62</sup> To "arrest and prevent" (literally in Russian: "to drag and not to let"), the expression is from Gleb Uspensky's story "The Police Station," depicting an overzealous policeman, Mymretsov, who with or without reason would "drag" people to the police station, or "not let" them go where they wanted to. The expression came to denote police despotism. p. 344
- <sup>63</sup> *Kostrov*, pseudonym of N. Jordania (see note 39). p. 375
- <sup>64</sup> "*Ragamuffin*," a character in Saltykov-Shchedrin's satire *In Foreign Lands*. p. 379
- <sup>65</sup> A verse from a soldiers' song of the Crimean War, written by Leo Tolstoy. The allusion is to an unsuccessful operation of the Russian troops commanded by General Read. p. 381
- <sup>66</sup> Lenin here refers to the declaration of September 10, 1914, made by Karl Liebknecht, Franz Mehring, Rosa Luxemburg and Clara Zetkin, and published in the Swiss press on October 30 and 31. p. 402
- <sup>67</sup> *The Zimmerwald Left* group was formed by Lenin at the first conference of internationalist Socialists held in Zimmerwald, Switzerland, in the beginning of September 1915. Lenin described this conference as the "first step" in the development of the international movement against the war. The only correct and thoroughly consistent stand in the Zimmerwald Left group was taken by the Bolsheviks, headed by Lenin. There were also inconsistent internationalists in the group. For criticism of their mistakes see Lenin's articles: "The Pamphlet by Junius" and "The Discussion on Self-Determination Summed Up" (*Collected Works*, Fourth Russian Edition, Vol. XXII, pp. 291-305 and 306-44) and J. V. Stalin's letter on "Some Questions Concerning the History of Bolshevism" (*Problems of Leninism*, Moscow 1947, pp. 378-89). p. 430
- <sup>68</sup> The Manifesto is omitted from the present edition. p. 438
- <sup>69</sup> In the present edition, these references are given in footnotes. p. 443

- <sup>70</sup> *Produgol*, the Russian Donets Basin Mineral Fuel Trading Company, established in 1906.

*Prodamet*, Russian Metallurgical Products Trading Company, established in 1901. p. 481

- <sup>71</sup> *Junius*, the pseudonym of Rosa Luxemburg (see note 59). p. 570

- <sup>72</sup> *Zimmerwald*—see note No. 67.

*Kienthal*. This refers to the second conference of internationalist Socialists held in Kienthal, Switzerland, in April 1916. The manifesto and resolution adopted at Kienthal marked a further step forward in the development of the international revolutionary movement against the war. But the Kienthal, like the Zimmerwald, conference failed to adopt the Bolshevik slogans: convert the imperialist war into civil war; defeat of one's own imperialist government in the war; organize the Third International. p. 577

- <sup>73</sup> *The Aarau Party Congress*, the Congress of the Social-Democratic party of Switzerland held in November 1915. p. 581







